

EC wants Bosnian leader to opt for peace

COPENHAGEN (R) — The European Community (EC), under fire over its policy to end the war in former Yugoslavia, met Bosnia's president on Monday to urge him to return to the negotiating table as the only chance for peace. Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, who has rejected new EC proposals to create three ethnic mini-states within the republic, made no comment as he arrived for the meeting with EC foreign ministers on the margins of a summit. The 12-nation community, trying to salvage something from the wreckage of an international peace plan that collapsed last week, said on Sunday Bosnia must remain a sovereign state despite the new plans to carve it up along ethnic lines. Diplomats said the message to Mr. Izetbegovic would be clear — that he must agree to discuss the new plan as talks in Geneva so that the war can be ended soon and that, in return, the EC will do everything to preserve a viable Muslim state in Bosnia. "There is no neat, tidy solution and it will only be reached when those who are doing the fighting are willing to sit down and reach it," British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said in a radio interview on Monday. "It can't be imposed from outside." Fighting rages; page 16

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Israelis, Palestinians to attend Milan talks

MILAN (AFP) — A three-day international conference bringing together prominent Israeli and Palestinian representatives will open in Milan Thursday, the Italian Centre for Peace in the Middle East said Monday. Some 60 international delegates will join Israeli parliamentarians and representatives of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the occupied territories to discuss the situation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the peace process and Europe's role in developing the region's economy. Those attending the meeting June 24-26, set to take place at the same time as the Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington, will include Israeli MP Yael Dayan, Israeli Deputy Agriculture Minister Walid Zaidi, PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo and Hanna Siniora, a prominent figure in East Jerusalem and editor of the daily Al Fajr.

Judges rules against Iran oil payments

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal court order has released an Oklahoma oil refinery from paying the \$10.1 million it owed the government-owned national Iranian Oil Co. for crude oil shipments. U.S. District Court Judge Roderick McKelvie ruled time had run out for Iranian oil to seek a legal remedy for its 14-year-old claim against the refinery, Mapco Inc. In 1979 Iranian oil sold Mapco 369,000 barrels of crude oil taken in two deliveries at Kharg Island in Iran. Mapco arranged payment through a 60-day letter of credit with an American bank. Between deliveries, Iranian students seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran on Nov. 4, 1979 and took some 90 hostages, including 63 Americans. After the incident, Mapco's bank refused to pay Iranian oil's bill, saying the invoice was incomplete.

Kravchuk suspends decree on power

KYIV (R) — President Leonid Kravchuk on Monday rescinded a decree placing himself at the head of Ukraine's government, a measure which had set him at odds with his prime minister. A new decree issued by Mr. Kravchuk said the country's leadership had to work out the relationship between the former Soviet republic's institutions.

Lissouba meets opposition demand

BRAZZAVILLE (AFP) — Congo's President Pascal Lissouba buckled under opposition pressure Monday by offering to annul results of the disputed second round of national elections which plunged the country into political and commercial crisis. Mr. Lissouba's climbdown after his camp earlier refused to negotiate came following an emergency meeting Sunday night with opposition leader Bernard Kolelas amid continuing post-election violence which has paralysed the capital city for 10 days.

Bomb defused near Cairo newspaper

CAIRO (AFP) — Disposal experts Monday defused a bomb near the semi-official Al Gomhuriya newspaper in central Cairo, bringing to four the number of bombs neutralised since a deadly blast on Friday, police said. A street sweeper found the bomb in a rubbish bin 10 meters from the newspaper building and alerted security forces, who evacuated the area before defusing the bomb. Two bombs were defused Sunday in the northern Cairo slum district of Shubra (see page 2).

Hundreds of women arrested in Tehran

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian security forces Monday arrested hundreds of women here in a crackdown to impose a strict Islamic dress code and closed about 100 boutiques. Armed policemen in Madar Square, in residential northern Tehran, rounded up several women and forced them to join 20 others in a bus which took them to a police station, witnesses said. Several women broke down in tears and others resisted arrest.

Intense consultation precedes bilaterals

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Arab and Israeli negotiators met with U.S. officials for intensive consultations here this weekend before the current round of Middle East peace talks resumes for a second week Tuesday.

Elakim Rubinstein, head of Israel's delegation, told AFP Monday that he had followed-up consultations with State Department officials about last week's negotiations but without achieving any significant developments. The deputy chief of the Palestinian delegation, Saeb Erakat, said for his part that "the U.S. and Palestinian concepts diverge on all the aspects of the peace process," and that there had been no progress during their contacts over the extended weekend.

No sessions of the peace talks are scheduled Fridays, Saturdays or Sundays to take account of religious observances by Muslims, Jews and Christians.

The talks would normally have resumed Monday, but there was no room at the State Department because the meeting rooms were required for an annual U.S.-Mexican meeting.

This 10th round of bilateral Middle East talks opened last Tuesday and was scheduled to last three weeks.

U.S. officials are trying to reach an agreement with the Palestinians on the text of a declaration of principles for autonomy in the occupied territories. Palestinians rejected the first U.S. proposal in May on the grounds it reflected Israeli views.

The Israeli-Palestinian declaration of principles would basically define the extent of powers of the Palestinians' future autonomous authority in the occupied territories and the limits of its jurisdiction.

Problems have arisen in particular over the status of East Jerusalem (see page 2).

Another major obstacle is Israel's settlements in the occupied territories, where about 120,000 Israelis live, not counting the 150,000 who have settled in Arab East Jerusalem.

Israel wants to keep control of its settlements and their land. U.S. officials also met at the end of the week with Syria's chief negotiator, Muaffak Allaf.

The State Department officials offered security guarantees to the Syrians and the Israelis as part of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Syrian-Israeli discussions last week centred on the question of security for the Golan. Syria demands a total Israeli withdrawal from the area before agreement can be reached on security.

The U.S. administration nominated Friday the assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, Edward Djerejian, as ambassador to Israel. The nomination of Mr. Djerejian, who has previously been ambassador to Syria, awaits Senate confirmation.

Denis Ross, an adviser to Secretary of State Warren Christopher, has been nominated to the new post of special coordinator for the Middle East.

Both the Israeli and Palestinian delegations said the nomination of these two men, who played a major role in the launch of peace talks in Madrid in 1991, shows the importance the United States was placing on the peace process.

Crown Prince hails King Hussein's Arab mission, pursuit of peace, democracy

AMMAN (I.T.) — Jordan, along with the rest of the Islamic World, Monday celebrated the Islamic New Year.

On the occasion, His Majesty King Hussein received the following letter from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent:

"On the occasion of the Hijri New Year, which commemorates the emigration of the Prophet (peace be upon him), from Mecca to Medina so that the Almighty may grant His truth triumph over falsehood, I am honoured to extend to Your Majesty my sincerest congratulations. In so doing, I pray the Almighty to protect Your Majesty and grant you success in all your endeavours to fulfil the aspirations of the Arab Nation; the mission Your Majesty inherited from your honoured ancestors and the responsibility which you have painstakingly and unsparingly strived to shoulder.

"Such are the basics that prompted Your Majesty's initiative of last year to shoulder the responsibility of the Islamic Ummah towards the Dome of the Rock, the Aqsa Mosque and the Holy City of Jerusalem, as well as the renovation of the mosques of the Companions of the Prophet.



The same principles prompted Your Majesty's numerous noble gestures and your redirection of the course of this country towards more popular participation, democracy and the pursuit of peace. It is no wonder that so many should flock to Jordan from all over the Islamic World; emigrants who are destitute or displaced, wrongly evicted from their homes and denied their world-



ly possessions; to receive the hearty welcome of Jordanians and their generous support and help, sharing what little they themselves have with them in order to safeguard the dignity of Muslims. Their stand echoes the path followed by the Prophet's descendants — Al El Bait — whom the Koran addresses with the Holy verses: 'The virtuous feed the poor, the orphaned and the captive

for the love of Allah assuring them with the words 'we feed you not to receive anything in return nor for your thanks.'

"The Jordanians who have great affection for Your Majesty pray the Almighty to your well-being and many happy returns of this glorious occasion. They pray that God grant you long life to continue your work to fulfil the mission of the Great Arab Revival based on the merits of Islam and Arab nationalism, which is the province, indeed the destiny of the Hashemites. Thus may heads remain high and eyes continue to look forward in search of new prospects for the welfare and progress of the nation and so that we may be what God intended us to be: The best ummah.

"Development, democracy and human rights are tenets that Jordan has always upheld and protected. Indeed, a decade ago, Jordan initiated the call for a new international humanitarian order.

"On the occasion, we recall the flood of Jordanian affection that gushed forth when the nation received Your Majesty back home. May you remain the bearer of our banner and the head of our house."

London Club talks on June 29-30

By Wafa Amr
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The steering committee of commercial banks in the London Club and Jordanian officials will meet in Amman on June 29-30 to agree on an agreement outlining the terms that will cover the rescheduling and reduction of Jordan's \$800 million commercial debts, official and commercial sources said Sunday.

After long and arduous discussions between the Jordanian government and the London Club, the terms offered by the London Club for repayment would enable Jordan to obtain a debt reduction package similar to, if not better than, that offered to Argentina, an informed source said.

According to the improved terms offered to Jordan, officials estimated that Jordan will be able to reduce its commercial debts in an amount of about \$250 million.

Jordan's commercial debts originally totalled \$1200 million which were spent on either armament or to finance the budget without earmarking. The Kingdom's commercial debts are part of its \$7 billion foreign debts. Economists noted that the percentage of the Kingdom's commercial debts in the total debts are low compared to other countries.

Jordan started rescheduling its debts in 1989, as part of an economic readjustment programme. Officials said that Jordan obtained the support of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) after it started implementing its own economic adjustment programme, aimed at reducing the balance of payments deficit and consumption, increasing exports, reducing unemployment and inflation and paying off its foreign debts.

Informed sources said that the idea in the London Club in

pursuing a Brady-plan-type approach was to obtain a debt reduction from foreign commercial banks against giving them collateral in the form of a zero coupon bond maturing after 30 years covering the principal of the loan and interest for 12 months.

They said Jordan agreed with the London Club, after long discussions, to obtain a package similar to Argentina's package which consists of the following structure: par bonds (bonds of nominal value, discounted bonds, buyback at prices to be determined by the borrower, Jordan's treatment of interest in arrears.

The sources said that the banks wanted Jordan to agree to another structure which would have given Jordan some temporary debt relief that would have been capitalised for payment at a later date.

However, after Jordan agreed with the commercial banks on the structure, there were long discussions with regard to the details of the par bonds and discounted bonds, whereas Jordan was willing to convert its debt to bonds at a discount of 35 per cent of the principal, it was willing to convert it to discounted bonds at 65 per cent at the current interest rates.

Officials said that, however, when it came to parbonds, the commercial banks were not willing to give Jordan the benefit resulting from the fact that the structure of the interest rate has declined since Argentina's deal was concluded.

"Jordan was worried that should it accept reduced discounted bonds at 35 per cent while accepting the structure of interest proposed by the banks, the reduction in debt in the parbonds will not be the equivalent to 35 per cent, and thus, the buyback equivalent price for parbonds will be high-

er than that for discounted bonds, and hence banks will opt for parbonds, and Jordan will not obtain a debt reduction equal to 35 per cent," a banker said.

Last month, the chairman of the steering committee of the commercial banks made Jordan an offer where the structure of the rate of interest and the other terms of parbonds were improved to the advantage of Jordan in a manner where Jordan would be benefitting from the reduction of the interest rate structure, an informed source said.

Moreover, the banks will also guarantee that if the debt to be exchanged by non-Jordanian banks for parbonds exceeds 65 per cent of all the outstanding debt owed to them, then their entitlement to receive parbonds will be reduced proportionately to maintain the ratio.

"The improvements were in the structure of rate of interest applied in the parbonds as well as on collateralisation of interest of such bonds," he said.

Hence, the source said, with these improvements, the terms offered by the commercial banks will make both the discounted bonds at 35 per cent and the parbonds with the new terms almost equal and perhaps the discounted bonds are more advantageous to the commercial banks, and therefore, practically Jordan will get 35 per cent reduction in its debt with the commercial banks.

Officials confirmed that the improved terms that have been offered to Jordan by the steering committee of the foreign commercial banks are appropriate and better than those that have been agreed upon with Argentina and the estimated buyback equivalent price for the offer to be in the range of 40 per cent to 42 per cent.

Israelis shoot and wound 5 in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli troops Monday shot and wounded five Palestinians including two children and a cameraman working for a British television station, Palestinian sources said.

A 10-year-old child and a 12-year-old were shot in the legs when the troops opened fire on demonstrators in the Shatti refugee camp. Two other Palestinians were also hurt.

Palestinian cameraman Majdi Al Harabit, 26, who was filming a protest for the British television WTN in Gaza City, was also shot in the legs when he refused to heed orders by an officer who asked him to stop filming.

In the Jabalya refugee camp, masked men meanwhile shot and killed a Palestinian suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities, the sources added.

Exile wants to go home

A Palestinian expellee to be returned to his home in the Gaza Strip because of illness said Monday that if the Red Cross was going to band him over to Israeli authorities he preferred to stay in

exile in Lebanon.

Ali Abu Ajweh, 37, an Arabic lecturer from the Islamic University in Gaza and a father of seven, has been diagnosed by the camp's physician as suffering from schizophrenia, said Dr. Abdul Aziz Kantisi, a physician from Gaza and spokesman for the 395 men expelled by Israel six months ago from the occupied territories.

"If the ICRC is going to take me to jail, then I prefer to stay here," Mr. Abu Ajweh told reporters. "They are going to take me home, then I want to go today."

The Palestinians have been trapped between Lebanese and Israeli army lines since their expulsion on Dec. 17. They were accused of instigating violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Israel said most fail time if they are returned.

Mr. Abu Ajweh denied reports identifying him as the son-in-law of Sheikh Awad Yassin, the spiritual leader of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) who was jailed for life in Israel in 1991 for murder.

Deri scandal raises fears for Rabin coalition

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — An Israeli cabinet minister warned Monday that corruption charges facing another minister from an ultra-religious party could destabilise Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's ruling coalition.

Israel's attorney general said on Sunday he had decided to bring bribery, fraud and abuse of public trust charges against Interior Minister Arye Deri, who has served two governments under the shadow of a three-year police probe.

However, Tourism Minister Uzi Baram of Mr. Rabin's Labour Party said on Monday the coalition must include a partner like Mr. Deri's Shas Party to carry out its policies in Middle East peace talks and economic reforms.

Mr. Baram said Mr. Deri is the "cement" of Shas' tie to the government. Shas holds six seats in Mr. Rabin's 62-58 parliamentary majority.

"Only time will tell what the fate of this government will be," Mr. Baram told army radio.

The backing of five leftist deputies outside the coalition blocks any immediate threat to Mr. Rabin's centre-left government but a Shas withdrawal would

undermine his ability to implement controversial policies.

When Mr. Rabin swept the former Likud government from power a year ago, Mr. Deri — the only minister left over from Yitzhak Shamir's right-wing cabinet — pledged to suspend his cabinet role if charges were formally filed against him.

Charges have yet to be filed in court.

Shas member of parliament Arye Gamliel said on Monday the party should "absolutely" bolt the government.

He called charges against Mr. Deri a "base libel" and an example of discrimination against Shas, formed by Sephardic Jews of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern descent.

"We are under constant persecution, and the establishment wants to wipe out Shas," he said of accusations party figures diverted funds to Shas-linked institutions and individuals.

One former Shas legislator is in jail for fraud, and a deputy minister is under police investigation for alleged corruption.

Mr. Deri, who is a rabbi, has said he would work to keep Shas in the government even if he faced charges.

Ghali, Aziz meet, say talks to continue

GENEVA (AP) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz held talks Monday on the continuing deadlock between Baghdad and the world body over implementing the terms of the Gulf ceasefire.

Both men described the 90-minute meeting as "constructive" and said they had agreed to continue discussions at all political levels.

"Nothing has been decided but we accepted the principle of continuing the talks," Dr. Ghali told reporters.

Before the meeting, the U.N. chief reiterated that Iraq must comply with U.N. Security Council resolutions before there could be any lifting of the economic embargo.

Iraq is accused of stalling over a number of U.N. resolutions aimed at dismantling its weapons of mass destruction and ability to produce them. These include biological weapons, a nuclear weapons programme and long-range ballistic missiles.

The U.N. Security Council last week criticised Baghdad for blocking weapons inspectors' requests to install surveillance cameras at missile test sites. The inspectors say this is necessary to make sure Iraq does not develop missiles with a range greater than 150 kilometres.

Baghdad said Saturday it would be willing to consider long-term U.N. monitoring of its weapons systems only if it had assurances this would lead to a

lifting of economic sanctions. The Iraqi economy is reeling under the impact of the sanctions, imposed after the August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Iraqi civilians have been worst hit.

Food and medicine are exempt from the sanctions, but the Iraqi government says it has no money for imports because of the trade embargo and the freezing of foreign assets worth about \$4 billion.

Baghdad has so far refused to accept a proposal to sell \$1.6 billion in oil — its most important export — to pay for food and medicine. The sales would be supervised by the United Nations and one-third of the proceeds would be used to compensate victims of the invasion and meet U.N. costs.

Mr. Aziz, who requested the meeting, said it was "constructive and cordial." He said it included all aspects of relations between the U.N. and Iraq but did not elaborate.

Arafat flies to Geneva

Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat left Tunis for Geneva where he is expected to meet Mr. Aziz, senior PLO officials said.

Senior PLO officials denied press reports that Mr. Arafat had resigned from the leadership of the central committee of PLO's mainstream movement Fatah during meetings which started on Saturday (see page 10).



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Jerusalem looms high in peace talks

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Jerusalem emerged this past week as a stumbling block in the Middle East peace talks after negotiations sidestepped the sensitive issue for 20 months.

"There can be no settlement without Jerusalem," Hanan Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, said in an interview with Israeli reporters.

The Palestinians see autonomy for the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza Strip as necessarily also including the eastern part of the city.

In Dr. Ashrawi's view, Israel has forced Palestinians to put the city's status on the negotiating table with its policies in the area, particularly by cutting off Arab East Jerusalem from the other occupied territories.

Since the tenth round of talks began between Israel and its Arab neighbours on June 15, the Palestinians consistently have raised the Jerusalem issue, both with the Israelis and officials with President Bill Clinton's administration.

Israel's foreign minister, Shimon Peres, accused the Palestinians Saturday of using the Jerusalem question to block the peace talks.

"Every time they want to hold up the negotiations, they raise the question of Jerusalem, knowing full well that negotiations can not get going much less be concluded when Jerusalem is brought up," he said.

The Israelis reject the Palestinian demand that autonomy be extended to Arab East Jerusalem, but are prepared to agree to allow East Jerusalem residents to vote in the election of a proposed autonomous council.

Israel "annexed" the Arab Jerusalem in 1967.

In 1980, Israel unilaterally declared Jerusalem its capital.

The move was not widely recognised by the international community, and a hostile divide still separates the Arab and Jewish quarters.

Israel has been keen to keep the Jerusalem question off the agenda since the marathon series of peace talks began in Madrid.

At Israel's request, the invitation letter sent by co-sponsors Washington and Moscow to all sides on Oct. 18, 1991, did not mention Jerusalem.

But the United States wrote to the Palestinians saying Jerusalem must never go back to being a divided city, and that its final status should be agreed at the negotiating table.

Washington also reminded the Palestinians it has not recognised Israel's "annexation" of the eastern part of the city, and that it recommended that all parties refrain from taking unilateral actions.

Palestinian deputy chief negotiator Saeb Erekat put his team's frustration this way: "Israel has taken us to a point of no return with its policy of intense colonisation and the isolation of Jerusalem."



HOME IN RUINS: A Lebanese woman and her children Monday look at the damage to their home caused by an Israeli helicopter raid Sunday in Jabal Al Botm, village in South Lebanon (AFP photo).

Guerrillas clash with UNIFIL

TYRE, Lebanon (Agencies) — Guerrillas clashed with United Nations peacekeepers in South Lebanon overnight, wounding one and holding an officer captive for four hours, the U.N. reported Monday.

The incident followed a guerrilla rocket attack on northern Israel.

Timor Goksel, spokesman for United Nations Truce Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), said a Fijian peacekeeper suffered a bullet wound in the leg.

He said a U.N. jeep rushing in reinforcement was ambushed by Hizbollah guerrillas and riddled with 50 bullets.

Guerrillas fired six Katyusha rockets into northern Israel Sunday evening and a dozen into Israeli-controlled South Lebanon. No damage or injuries were reported.

A few hours later, Mr. Goksel said, Fijian soldiers at a roadblock in Ghassaniyeh village questioned three Hizbollah guerrillas and found eight Katyusha rockets hidden in their pickup truck.

While two guerrillas argued, the driver escaped, carrying a walkie-talkie radio. He apparently alerted other members of the group, Mr. Goksel said.

A Fijian officer and two soldiers headed for Ghassaniyeh to reinforce the roadblock but their jeep was ambushed. Some 50 bullets hit the jeep, Mr. Goksel said. Guerrillas captured the officer and the two soldiers with him.

One, who was missing for six hours, was found with a bullet wound to his leg. He was taken to a hospital and Mr. Goksel said he was in stable condition.

More Fijian reinforcements sent to the checkpoint came under fire from Hizbollah, Mr. Goksel said. No one was hurt.

The officer was released four hours later after contacts between UNIFIL, Lebanese army officers and Hizbollah, he said.

Guerrillas had fired 12 Katyusha rockets that crashed harmlessly in northern Israel and Israel's self-designated "security zone" in South Lebanon earlier Sunday.

In retaliation, Israeli forces mounted a helicopter attack and unleashed a heavy barrage of artillery fire against Hizbollah-controlled villages north of the "security zone." No casualties were reported in the clashes.

Israelis to meet N. Korean officials over missile sales

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Two Israeli diplomats will meet senior officials in the North Korean Communist Party in Peking in the coming days in a bid to halt Pyongyang's missile sales to the Middle East, officials said Monday.

The foreign ministry deputy director-general, Eytan Benzur, and his aide Avi Sison will travel to China at the end of the week, a ministry spokesman said.

"We expect the discussions to be long and without immediate results," the spokesman said, without specifying the date of the talks.

Israel is particularly concerned that Iran will buy a new North Korean missile capable of hitting the Jewish state.

Pyongyang successfully test launched on May 29 the Nodong-1, a ballistic missile with a 1,000-kilometre range that could carry a nuclear warhead, according to the Japanese government.

Tehran has already bought Scud-C missiles, which have a range of 600 kilometres from the North Koreans, who also sell to Syria. Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at Israel during the 1991 Gulf war.

Israel has recently successfully test-fired an anti-missile missile as part of the U.S. Strategic Defence Initiative dubbed "Star Wars."

Reports that the United States had approved Israel's moves to contact Pyongyang over the missile fears have raised concern in South Korea, which is worried that the secretive Stalinist state may be developing a nuclear bomb.

Although North Korea has suspended its withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, it has not accepted international inspection of its nuclear facilities.

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres informed his South Korean counterpart last week on the sidelines of a U.N. human rights conference in Vienna in a move aimed at calming concern in Seoul, officials said.

The Haaretz newspaper reported Monday that Mr. Benzur, who is leaving the Middle East peace talks in Washington to go to China, would travel on to Tokyo and Seoul after Peking to report on his meeting with the North Koreans.

Mr. Benzur is number two in the Israeli delegation negotiating with the Palestinians at the bilateral talks.

Debt, famine, AIDS and civil war on OAU agenda

CAIRO (Agencies) — African foreign ministers met Monday to discuss major challenges facing their continent, including staggering foreign debt, famine, and AIDS, and destructive internal conflicts.

The ministers from the 52-nation Organisation of African Unity (OAU) are to meet for five days to prepare for a summit of African heads of state starting June 28.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is to take over the presidency of the OAU for a year.

On Monday, Egyptian Prime Minister Atfi Sedki warned of the challenges facing Africa at a 90-minute opening ceremony at the international conference hall in suburban Nasr City.

"There is poverty and desertification, starvation and foreign debt as well as conflict areas that hold back development and which we must find ways to resolve," Mr. Sedki said.

He urged the ministers to sign a treaty creating an African economic community to coordinate policies across the continent. Twenty-seven of the necessary 35 African nations have so far approved the pact.

"We have no choice where this is concerned in light of the huge international groups," Mr. Sedki said, referring to the European Community, the Asian trading bloc and other groupings.

The ministers also are to discuss foreign debt, which amounts to \$288 billion for African nations, as well as the civil war plaguing the continent, creating refugees and undermining efforts against famine.

The delegates will consider creating a system for resolving conflicts. But some member states fear such a mechanism would be too costly and could interfere with individual nation's sovereignty.

The spread of AIDS in Africa is another topic. According to the draft agenda, 7.5 million out of 12 million HIV-infected persons worldwide are on the African continent. It estimated that 14 million HIV infections will have occurred in sub-Saharan Africa by the year 2000.

Time-bomb defused in Cairo slum

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egyptian security forces dismantled a time-bomb near a mosque in a Cairo slum, security sources said Monday.

They said the bomb was found Sunday night in the north Cairo neighbourhood of Shubra, where a bomb killed seven people Friday night and wounded 15.

The sources said the bomb, wrapped in newspapers and a nylon bag, was spotted outside the Omar Ben Al Khattab Mosque by a resident who alerted security forces.

They did not say how many pounds of explosives the bomb contained but said it was a time-bomb.

Four bombs have exploded in Cairo since February.

Over the last 14 months, Muslim militants have attacked police, Christians and tourists in a campaign that has wrecked Egypt's tourist industry. More than 142 people have been killed.

On Saturday, security forces dismantled a time-bomb containing five kilograms of explosive and nails outside a bazaar shop in the southern tourist resort of Aswan, 690 kilometres south of Cairo.

A top interior ministry official Sunday denied that the army was ready to join the battle against the militants.

"The police still control the situation," General Bahaeddin Ibrahim, an assistant to Interior Minister Hassan Al Aili, told foreign journalists at the Red Sea resort of Tabaa.

Gen. Ibrahim said there were no "terrorist" groups able to seize power in any part of Egypt, and therefore the authorities did not need to resort to the army, but he added that the police asked the army to help train its forces.

On Friday, the defence minister, General Hussein Tantawi, warned the army would be deployed "if necessary" to combat Muslim militants, according to remarks appearing in pro-government newspapers.

Gen. Ibrahim said police needed the help of the people more than that of the army to catch militant leaders.

There were no more than 3,000 armed militants, the ministry official said, adding that they were well organised and were afraid of nothing.

While conceding it was difficult to obtain evidence of a government-financing militant operations, he charged that fundamentalists recently admitted during interrogation that they had received money from Iran.

Gen. Ibrahim said Islamic militants have committed 64 attacks — including 17 against tourists — since the beginning of a wave of violence in March 1992.

These attacks have killed 165 people, including 65 militants, 39 policemen, 29 Coptic Christians, and 29 bystanders hit by stray bullets or explosions, and three foreign tourists, according to an AFP toll.

Egypt's Prime Minister Atef Sedki complained Monday at the opening of an Organisation of African Unity foreign ministers' meeting some African countries were supporting Islamic fundamentalist violence.

He said that in some unnamed African states, people were trying to block development and progress "by violence and terrorism."

Mr. Sedki urged all necessary firmness in confronting the threat, "above all when this terrorism and violence enjoy complicity and support inside our continent."

Political analysts said he was referring to neighbouring Sudan in particular. Egypt accuses it of sheltering and supporting armed Egyptian insurgents suspected of setting off car bombs and carrying out other attacks this year.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lebanon's Hariri to visit Kuwait Tuesday

KUWAIT (R) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri will start an official two-day visit to Kuwait on Tuesday, the Kuwait News Agency said Monday. Mr. Hariri, will be accompanied by Defence Minister Mohsen Daloul, Displaced People Minister Walid Junblatt and Information Minister Michel Samaha, the official agency said. Mr. Hariri is to meet the emir, Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al Sabah, and Crown Prince and Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah. He and his delegation will leave on Wednesday. Mr. Hariri last visited Kuwait on Feb. 16 for talks with the emir and crown prince.

Kyrgyzstan president visits Tehran

NICOSIA (AP) — Kyrgyzstan's president, Askar Akayev, arrived Monday in Tehran to promote economic, political and cultural relations between his former Soviet republic and Iran. Tehran's state-run Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quoted Mr. Akayev as telling reporters on arrival that "important" documents will be signed to cement Tehran-Bishkek cooperation. The agency monitored in Nicosia, said Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani greeted Mr. Akayev on arrival. It quoted Mr. Rafsanjani as saying the newly independent central Asian republics were all "very dear" to Iran. "We are ready to cooperate with them in all domains," he added. Iran has been pushing for close ties with the former Soviet republics and has signed a number of accords with their governments over the past two years.

Rebel Kurds kill oilman in attack in Turkey

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Rebel Kurds killed a Turkish oil worker and a soldier in an attack on a state oil rig in southeast Turkey, officials said Monday. They said the two were killed during a clash Sunday night when members of the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) raided the Barzan oil field in Batman province, Turkey's premier oil area, run by the Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO). The attackers set ablaze two oil tanks, but the fire has since been contained. The emergency state governor's office said damage from the attack, the first of its kind reported since five workers killed two Mobil Oil Turk engineers and wounded five workers in September in Batman, was about four billion liras (\$376,000). The PKK killed an engineer and seven workers from the U.S.-based Aladdin Middle East in 1991. Foreign oil industrialists in Turkey said earlier they were disturbed by Kurdish violence in the southeast, where almost all of Turkey's oil activity is concentrated. Mobil Oil Turk, the third biggest oil producer in Turkey after TPAO and Shell, applied to have 14 of its 45 exploration licences in the southeast cancelled after the September attack.

Iran denies report of deadly quake

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Monday denied newspaper reports that a deadly earthquake hit the northwestern region of Iranian Azerbaijan on Sunday. "No quake was registered," insisted the official news agency IRNA, quoting Tehran University's geophysics centre and officials of the province of West Azerbaijan. Two newspapers earlier reported 24 people were killed and 49 wounded when a quake measuring 4.6 on the open-ended Richter scale struck Miandowab. But a local official, contacted by AFP, dismissed the report as "lies."

Djibouti court rejects Ali Aref appeal

NAIROBI (R) — Djibouti's supreme court has turned down an appeal against a 10-year sentence imposed on Ali Aref Bourhane, head of the colonial administration before independence in 1977. Mr. Aref was jailed last July after being convicted on charges of threatening state security. Eight co-defendants received 10-year sentences, while five others were ordered jailed for five years by the state security tribunal. Some 47 other people were sentenced in absentia to five years' imprisonment. A Djibouti Radio reporter told Reuters by telephone the supreme court reached its decision Friday. Mr. Ali Aref's Afar ethnic group has strong support in the north and backs the rebel front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD). Mr. Ali Aref says he is not a member of any political group. Charges against Mr. Ali Aref and his group included threatening state security, assassination and attempted assassination. Mr. Ali Aref's appeal was based on reports of irregularities in the July trial by international observers.

'Egyptian authorities detain Sudan convoy'

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Egyptian authorities detained a Sudanese food convoy of 50 lorries for three days before allowing it through to the disputed territory of Halaib at the weekend, Sudan's official SUNA news agency reported. Egyptian security forces stopped the convoy last week at Osi, 20 kilometres south of Halaib town in the border territory on the Red Sea, SUNA said. The trucks were only allowed to proceed after "lengthy" discussions between those in charge of the convoy and Egyptian officers, the agency said. Thirty of the lorries, dispatched by trades unions and professional associations, came from Khartoum and the others joined them on the way north. A long-standing dispute over the oil-rich zone came to a head last year when Khartoum gave a prospecting concession to a Canadian company. Relations between the fundamentalist-backed junta here and the Egyptian government are at a low ebb because of alleged Sudanese support for armed Islamic extremists in Egypt.

German court will not hear Ghali on Somalia

BONN (R) — Germany's highest court has turned down an offer from U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to testify at its hearing on a bid to bar German troops from Somalia, a government spokesman said Monday. Dr. Ghali, due in Bonn for a previously scheduled visit Wednesday, had offered in a letter to Chancellor Helmut Kohl to testify before the court in Karlsruhe on the importance of a German role in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Somalia. Mr. Kohl's government has started deploying 1,700 troops to Somalia but opposition Social Democrats have asked the federal constitutional court to halt the mission, arguing Bonn is violating military curbs in its 1969 constitution. Government spokesman Norbert Schaefer told journalists that the court was already planning to hear testimony about the mission from a U.N. deputy secretary-general, Vladimir Petrovsky.

Jordan Times
Tel. 667171

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 7311-19

PROGRAMMES TWO

18:30 Omniscience
19:30 Maguy
19:30 News in French
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:30 News in Arabic
20:30 Beadles About
21:10 False Arrest
21:30 News in English
22:25 Feature Film: "Breaking Point"

PRAYER TIMES

05:30 Fajr
06:30 (Sunrise) Duha
12:37 Dhur
16:16 Asr
19:47 Maghreb
21:24 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweteh, Tel. 610740
Assembly of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrence Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 633541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775241

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 625226

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932

Church of the Redeemer Tel. 638526

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
A rise in temperatures will take place and winds will be light and variable, becoming at times easterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. Temp

Amman 20 / 35

Aqaba 25 / 41

Deserts 20 / 37

Jordan Valley 23 / 29

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 33, Aqaba 39. Humidity readings: Amman 16 per cent, Aqaba 20 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mohammad Al Azza 752971
Dr. Yousef Abdo 694916
Dr. Khalil Mohammad 740740
Dr. Rana Muzaw 794788
First pharmacy 861912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 626672
Al Salan pharmacy 636730
Yaacob pharmacy 644945
Shamsan pharmacy 637660
Nairookh pharmacy 623472
Najih pharmacy 847532

IBRID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Hela [—]

Alquds pharmacy [—]

ZARQA:
Dr. Yousef Abu Saad [—]
Khalid pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 658001
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897447
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (Directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 621101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111

RADIO JORDAN

Water Authority 774111
Electricity Authority 815015
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 81381302
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Akhil Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsan 669131
Sheikhan Hospital 649131
University Hospital 643845
Al-Mushar Hospital 6672719
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Mahjoun 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 77111126
Army, Marka 89161155
Queen Alia Hospital 688100
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)987332
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909490
Princess Basmia Hospital (02)725555

Greek Catholic Hospital

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)72775

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information Department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

05:45 Jeddah (RJ)
06:30 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:30 Damascus (RJ)
06:30 Dhahran (RJ)
06:30 Aqaba (RJ)
06:30 Muscat (RJ)
06:30 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
06:30 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
06:30 Mumbai (RJ)
07:35 London (RJ)
07:45 Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

15:30 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

20:40 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)

01:30 Tunis (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

13:30 Cairo (RJ)

16:45 Rome (AZ)

18:20 Paris, Beirut (ME)

20:40 Beirut (ME)

23:30 Bucharest (RO)

MARKET PRICES

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:45 Frankfurt (RJ)
07:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:15 Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
12:45 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
12:50 Geneva, Frankfurt (RJ)
13:15 Munich (RJ)
13:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
13:45 Cairo (RJ)
13:55 London (RJ)
16:30 Tunis (RJ)
21:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
22:15 Larnaca (RJ)
22:45 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)
23:40 Dubai (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:15 Larnaca, Vienna (OS)

14:15 Cairo (ME)

17:45 Dubai (AZ)

01:00 Bucharest (RO)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg

Apple 700 / 700
Banana 680 / 680
Banana (Mukamar) 440 / 140
Beans 100 / 50
Cabbage 300 / 200
Cauliflower 180 / 120
Cucumbers (large) 70 / 30
Cucumbers (small) 120 / 180
Eggplant 600 / 300
Garlic 600 / 300
Lemon 600 / 500
Marrow (large) 140 / 90
Marrow (small) 250 / 200
Mint 150 / 100
Onion (dry) 120 / 100
Orange 340 / 260
Pepper (hot) 180 / 120
Pepper (sweet) 240 / 180
Potato 180 / 120
Tomato 80 / 40

Jordan still awaits U.N. recommendation on establishing new world humanitarian order

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has said that Jordan was among the first group of nations to demand the establishment of a new world humanitarian order and is ready to take steps towards its implementation.

Jordan made the demand to the world at the start of the past decade and renewed it in January of 1992 in an address to the United Nations General Assembly, said Prince Hassan Sunday evening in a lecture delivered at the Royal Police Academy.

The Kingdom still awaits a recommendation by the U.N. Secretary General in this regard

in order to take the first step in implementing such an order, said Prince Hassan.

Jordan takes pride in the fact that it has been contributing to the various international initiatives aiming to safeguard human rights and promoting comprehensive development, noted the Regent.

Currently, Jordan is recruiting a widely experienced team to participate in the 1995 International Conference on Social Development, which will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, he said. In two years, the United Nations will celebrate its 50th anniversary and it is incumbent upon the Muslim nation to remind the world community of the need to safeguard the basic rights of the child and the principles of human rights which Islam has been advocating.

Referring to the rights of displaced people and migrants, the Regent said, perhaps the new Hijra year celebration Moodya will remind people of the forced migration of the Prophet and his sufferings, and the subsequent migrations and displacement of people in our region through wars and occupation.

"This also prompts us to re-member Jordan's assistance to the displaced persons over the past years and its recent hosting of the Bosnian Muslims, who are staying here temporarily until the time for their return to their homeland, added the Regent.

During his visit to the academy, the Regent listened to a briefing on training courses and development plans.

He also listened to a briefing on the mission of the police force serving with the U.N. peacekeeping troops in Croatia.

Hashemite charity to survey skills of guest Bosnians

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Al Abbadi, who chairs the Executive Committee of the Hashemite Charity Organisation, Monday said the organisation was about to conduct a study that will help provide Bosnian families hosted by Jordan with special professional skills, Jordan Television reported.

Dr. Abbadi, who was accompanying Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan on a visit to the Bosnian families in their temporary shelter in Umm Teena district in Amman, said the organisation will conduct studies on the Bosnian guests' skills, capabilities and desires in order to rehabilitate them professionally.

"We are about to prepare a study on all the guests... in order to prepare a rehabilitation programme for them to make them spend their leisure time in useful activities that would also make them able to serve the project and themselves when they return home," the minister said.

Princess Sarvath, who was also accompanied on the visit by Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas, inspected facilities available at the shelters, which are housing about 420 Bosnians who arrived in Jordan in the past few days. They will temporarily reside in

Jordan until the destructive war in their homeland stops.

On Monday, the Jordan Women's Federation provided lunch for the Bosnian families in a show of support for government efforts.

Head of the federation Haifa Abu Ghazaleh called on all public and private institutions to follow the lead of the federation and extend support to the Bosnian families.

"I call upon all members of the Jordanian family to carry out their role and help the government in its endeavours because these are not only the guests of the government, these are the guests of our people," she said.

Civil services to accept job applications July 1

AMMAN (Petra) — The Civil Service Commission (CSC) will begin accepting new applications as well as application renewals for posts in government departments as of July 1, according to Abdul Ulayyan, the CSC president.

New applications will be channelled through the post offices, and old applications can be renewed at the CSC office in Amman, said Mr. Ulayyan Monday.

The application renewal process is necessary in order for the CSC to determine the number of applicants who are still interested in working for the government, Mr. Ulayyan explained.

In the past year, 57,000 of the 88,000 applicants who originally sought employment with the government through the CSC renewed their applications, he said. "In the first five months of 1993 we discovered that nearly 40 per cent of the people who had applied for work with the government through the CSC had found jobs with the private sector," he added.

Referring to the rate of university graduates among the applicants, Mr. Ulayyan said they account for 30 per cent of the total and these, he added, are given priority by government departments.

The total number of vacant posts in government offices for this year is 4,500, said Mr. Ulayyan.

He said so far the CSC has recruited and appointed 2,000 of the applicants in various departments.

Three categories of applicants were given priority and treated as special cases, Mr. Ulayyan added. These, he said, are sons of martyrs, of whom 75 have been employed in the government, handicapped persons of whom 52 will be recruited this year and an unspecified number of eligible applicants from needy families.

Decision to update voter lists 'routine,' say members of Parliament

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Parliamentarians Monday described as a "routine measure" a government decision to form committees to update and revise voter registration lists in the country's 20 voting districts.

The government is implementing the law. The decision is a routine one that has no serious implications for the date of the elections, a member of the Lower House of Parliament Marwan Al Hmoud said.

Minister of Interior Saleh Hammad Sunday entrusted provincial governors with forming committees to update voters' lists to include voters whose names did not appear in the lists for the 1989 parliamentary elections, delete the names of voters who died since then and examine the applications of voters who have changed their place of residence.

The minister said in a statement that voters who have changed their place of residence and wish to register in new voting districts should submit their applications before August 1. These applications should be accompanied with documents proving that the voter has moved from his/her old voting district and with his/her old voting card.

The minister's statement, carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said the voters' committees would seek information from courts and the Civil Status Department to update voters' lists to account for deceased persons, voters who were sentenced by courts, thus losing the eligibility to vote, and voters whose names



Jordanians are expected to go to the polls in late 1993 to elect members of Parliament in the first multi-party elections in the Kingdom in three decades (File photo)

did not appear in the previous lists.

"It is a positive step that government started to update the (voters) list. But the decision has no indications for the next elections," scheduled for later this year, member of the Muslim Brotherhood bloc at the House Hammad said told the Jordan Times.

Along with other political parties in the Kingdom, the Brotherhood is awaiting the government's decision on a date for the elections and the law under which they would be held.

The government is constitutionally obliged to hold the elec-

tions before the mandate of the current Parliament ends on Nov. 23, but it is still not clear whether a change in the law is forthcoming.

It has been non-committal on the issue, only confirming that no changes would be introduced before consulting with "everyone concerned," while members of the House and political parties say no change should be made without the approval of Parliament.

The government can call the House for an extraordinary session before its mandate ends and the Constitution stipulates that a session should be held if 41 de-

puties or more request it. Deputies earlier said they would demand an extraordinary session if the government changed the legislation by issuing a temporary law.

Mr. Hmoud said the only thing the formation of the committees indicates is that elections will not be held before August as has been suggested by some observers.

No numbers on eligible voters for the next elections were immediately available and Ministry of Interior officials could not be reached for comment Monday, a public holiday to mark the Islamic new year.



COSTUME SHOWS: Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Al Faisal Monday attends a show of Jordanian and Palestinian traditional costumes. The Princess also attended a show of Iraqi, Yemeni, Egyptian, Syrian and Arab Gulf traditional costumes. The costume design events coincide with the 11th convention of the Arab-American Medical Association which is currently convened in Amman. The events aim to acquaint Arab-Americans with Jordanian and Arab heritage.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of watercolours, entitled "Landscapes of Jordan," by Prof. Elmar Dittmann at the Phoenix Art Gallery, Gardens Street.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by artists Nawal Abdullah Katana and Dodi Tabbaa at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of Japanese paintings and photos at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Paintings by Salem Al Dabbagh, Himat Ali and Karim Rassa at the Abdul Hameed Shomaa Foundation Gallery (10 a.m.-5 p.m.).
- ★ Art exhibition by 26 Jordanian artists at Eshebelia Art Gallery, 6th Circle, Amra Shopping Centre.
- ★ Photo exhibition entitled "Childhood" at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Peace process will only be successful with strong U.S. involvement — former ambassador

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Middle East peace process launched in Madrid 20 months ago has withstood the change of guard at the White House and the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations are going in the right direction, but the process may not bear fruit without direct American involvement and use of U.S. leverage sooner or later, says a veteran American analyst and former ambassador.

According to Herman Eilts, who retired from active U.S. foreign service in 1979 after serving as ambassador to Egypt, Washington had been trying to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict since the early 50s, but changes in administrations and pre-occupations with the cold war had consistently aborted successive efforts every time a breakthrough was in sight.

Mr. Eilts, addressing a small gathering at the headquarters of the Al Ahd Party, said Sunday that the present framework of separate tracks of bilateral negotiations between Israel and each of the Arab parties involved in the conflict offered the best approach.

"In my long career, there was never this constellation of elements (where) prospects (for a settlement) are bright," said Mr. Eilts, in his 70s and described by many as a symbol of "living American history" because of his close involvement with U.S. foreign policy since the 1940s.

its ideas and viewpoints on what is fair and what is not fair" at certain point in the negotiations, it is difficult to envisage the talks producing positive outcome.

In a one-hour lecture followed by 30 minutes of questions and answers, Mr. Eilts presented what could be described as a thumbnail sketch of how Washington looked at the Arab-Israeli conflict and what considerations went into shaping its approaches at various points in time to settle the conflict.

The overriding factor, he said, was "whether you like it or not," an unwavering American commitment to the "welfare and security of Israel." But such a stand, he said, did not predetermine the shape of an Arab-Israeli peace settlement.

One gaping element left unaddressed by the former diplomat was why and how the U.S. could adopt a neutral stand of leaving it to the parties to work out a settlement at a time when Washington's unequivocal political, military and moral support for Israel was giving the Jewish state an edge in every phase of the conflict.

According to Mr. Eilts: The U.S. commitment to ending the conflict was made as early as the 50s when Harry Truman was president. It was a clear understanding then that an American approach to the issue would be based on three major elements: use of American good offices to negotiate and reach a settlement, American economic assistance to the parties concerned and American guarantees to support whatever peace agree-

ment was reached.

But the main problem was the complex nature of the conflict which preempted efforts for a "comprehensive" approach and diverted energies towards "incremental" solutions. This explains the varying approaches tried by the U.S. such as focusing on the water problems as was done by Eric Johnston in the early 1960s, efforts on the Egyptian-Israeli track which were rebuffed by the late Egyptian leader Jamal Abdul Nasser and the bid by Joseph Johnsoo to address the problem of Palestinians displaced by war.

None of these approaches succeeded for one reason or another, starting with changes in the administration, personal attitudes and preoccupations of successive U.S. presidents.

The situation was further complicated with the added element of Israel's occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights in the 1967 war. A "comprehensive" approach to the complex situation was further set back because of the territorial question that came into existence after the war.

Furthermore, Washington's credibility was also put into question since it had not lived up to a commitment given to Israel in 1957 that the U.S. would step in if the Tiran Straits were closed, as Nasser did in May 1967.

Anwar Sadat, who succeeded Nasser as Egypt's president in 1970, wanted a peaceful solution. But he was told by Henry Kissinger, secretary of state in the Nixon administration, that "you

cannot hope to get back through negotiations what you could not get through war."

This was interpreted by Sadat as an invitation to war which could subsequently engage Israel in peace negotiations, and this explains why he went to war in 1973. "The U.S. was totally surprised by the war since it did not believe Egypt had the military power to do it."

Kissinger worked out separate disengagement agreements between Israel and the Arab countries concerned.

But peace agreements remained elusive. Efforts to reach accords through an international conference were aborted by differing positions and preconditions set by various parties.

Finally, it was not until the Carter presidency that Sadat, "with the flair for melodrama," visited occupied Jerusalem and initiated direct negotiations with Israel.

Eventually the 1978 Camp David agreement was signed. But that did not produce any solution to the core of the conflict — the Palestinian problem — or Israel's occupation of other Arab territories.

Carter was determined to push along the other tracks of conflict, but he was defeated in elections and Ronald Reagan, who succeeded him, was more preoccupied with the global face-off with the Soviet Union than the Middle East problem.

The Bush administration that succeeded the Reagan White House managed to secure Arab and Israeli confidence following the Gulf war over Kuwait, and hence the international conference in Madrid in October 1991 that launched the new peace process.

"I have to admit that the Clinton administration has done well so far in the process, in terms of guiding it in the right direction," said Mr. Eilts.

Essentially, the three principles set out during the Truman administration remain in place, he said, "except of course I don't know whether the element of American (economic) assistance is still valid."

Following the lecture, Mr. Eilts answered questions from the audience and made the following points:

— Israel's "Gaza first" offer is "loving trouble." The densely-populated strip already has enough problems of its own rather than to be the testing ground for Palestinian autonomy — unless of course Israel wants to make the point that the Palestinians are incapable of administering their own affairs.

— Some of the issues that remain stumbling blocks in the ongoing negotiations in Washington were raised during the Egyptian-Israeli negotiations in 1978 and did not produce any solutions. Some parts of the Camp David agreement were written in haste and left many points ambiguous with the argument or consolation that these issues could be crystallised during

negotiations on Palestinian autonomy talks which never materialised because Reagan did not pick up where Carter left off.

— The shape of a peace settlement cannot be determined since it depends on the negotiating parties themselves and American involvement. Washington is talking about a "full-partner" role in the negotiations, but "I doubt whether the administration itself knows what it means."

— Security Council Resolution 242 contradicts itself in its provisions, with "preamble language" conflicting with "operative languages." The most outstanding point in question is the omission of the word "the" in the English text while referring to the Arab territories occupied by Israel. But the ultimate judgement on this lies with the party that originally presented the resolution to the council in 1967 — Britain and Jordan.

— While its commitment to the "welfare and security" of Israel remains very much in place, Washington's interests in the Middle East "are broader than its relationship with Israel." This should be taken into consideration by the Arabs while pushing the U.S.

— The Arabs could and should launch a better public relations campaign in the U.S. to present their case. "It is not a matter of winning or losing, but simply a matter of presenting the right image and right information at the right time." Spurts of such campaigns will not work; there has to be a sustained, long-term strategy and objective.

3rd Jordanian's release from Syrian jails prompts lawyers to seek freedom of rest

By Elia Nasrallah Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — With the release thus far this year of 3 Jordanians from Syrian jails the Jordanian Bar Association (JBA) is stepping up its efforts to secure the release of the remaining Jordanian detainees in Syria. "Two days ago, I learned that the Syrian authorities released Hassan Al Khatib, who has been detained for the past 22 years and I am waiting for the others to be set free in fulfillment of promises made at a meeting in Morocco last month to Jordanian lawyers by Syrian attorneys who said they would seek every possible way to secure their release," said JBA President Kamal Nasser.

Dr. Nasser told the Jordan Times Monday that he will head a team next week to Damascus to discuss at the highest levels with Syrian officials the release of the remaining Jordanians.

According to the JBA presi-



Hakem Al Fayez

dent, Dafi Jamaaoui, Hatem Zurikat, Saeed Hatamleh and other Jordanians are still detained in Syria.

Hakem Al Fayez, who served 22 years in Syrian jails returned to Jordan on Jan. 14. Last week Mjalli Nasraween crossed the borders into Jordan after 23 years



Mjalli Nasraween

in detention.

Asked about the association's plans to help secure the release of the 10 Jordanian and Palestinian prisoners sentenced to death in Kuwait, Dr. Nasser said the JBA has three options:

"First we are trying through the Arab Lawyers Union to exert

pressure on the Kuwaitis to set them free. Second, if this does not bear fruit, the association is planning to hire Kuwaiti lawyers to contest the death sentences in higher Kuwaiti courts; and third, an association team would visit Kuwait to discuss the matter with the Kuwaiti government," he explained.

Should all three measures fail to yield positive results, the JBA will call for an emergency meeting in Amman, of the Cairo-based Arab Lawyers Union to discuss the situation and might take the matter to the United Nations, said Dr. Nasser.

"Detaining people without trial and arbitrarily sentencing them to death are violations of basic human rights, something which we will fight," he added.

Dr. Nasser said that the bar association was pursuing these efforts with the Syrians and the Kuwaitis simultaneously, until every Jordanian detainee has been freed.

Jordan elected to panel of Non-Aligned Movement

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan was elected a member of the Non-Aligned Movement's permanent information coordination panel at a meeting of ministries of information of non-aligned countries, held in Pyongyang, North Korea.

The week-long meeting reviewed resolutions passed by the 10th conference of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Jakarta in 1992, the current information situation world-wide and the non-aligned countries' information policies, including their information and media strategies in the new world order, cooperation among the countries in the south-

ern hemisphere in the information and media fields, and the transfer of modern technology related to information to members of the movement.

Jordan was among 60 nations participating in the meeting and was represented by Ibrahim Shabzadeh, director of Jordan Television and the second secretary of Jordan's embassy in Peking.

The conference, which ended Sunday evening, announced that the fifth meeting by the non-aligned countries information ministers would be held in Nigeria in 1996.

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For further information, please call 845572 summer school section, June 26-July 22, 1993. Saturday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

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Reunion in healthy style

ARAB-AMERICAN doctors have come to Amman for their 11th international medical convention. We welcome them with pride, but also with mixed emotions and thought. Fleeting, we think that this may be both a good place and a starting point for Arab unity, solidarity or at least homecoming. Because irrespective of their country of origin, these doctors are bound by professional duty and they leave aside petty politics for the sake of Hippocrates' oath and that of humankind. But the fact that they have "come" to Amman, in the course of their meetings that take them to different Arab countries each year, somehow brings to us a sad thought too.

Why did so many brilliant minds end up abroad in the first place? Some because of indifference, perhaps. After all doctors in the U.S. are paid their worth in gold, as they say. Some no doubt left because unemployment in their countries was too high to allow for one more skillful physician to practise at home. And most, unfortunately, emigrated because of the dream of freedom the "new world" was sure to give them. Because freedom stands above anything else and in most Arab countries it is not a commodity available in abundance, some of our highly educated men and women end up living outside the motherland.

In the opening speeches, it was made a point, time and again, to mention the democratic path Jordan has adopted for itself. Jordanian-Americans were not ashamed to feel proud that their roots now lie in a country where human rights are well respected and nurtured.

Educated people are an asset to any country. Doctors even more so as so many lives hinge on their skills and knowledge. It is nice to host the expatriate doctors every now and then, but it would be just wonderful to have them here for good.

And Jordan has started doing its share in paving the way for a climate devoid of oppression and fear, one conducive to development and humanitarianism. Maybe if other Arab countries followed suit, in a few years' time we would not have such conventions any more.

In the meanwhile, though, we have to make do with what we have. If the AAMA convention can help Jordanian doctors benefit from the experience and expertise of their compatriots in the U.S., then the conference will serve a very useful purpose. It will be equally important if the convention is successful in establishing ties for the future, where cooperation and solidarity among Arabs and Arab-Americans replace rivalry and petty squabbles among governments and regimes inside the Arab World.

This is an opportunity to do this and more. To this end, we welcome the conferees and urge them to spend just a little extra time just to see how their presence here practically fits in the picture as a whole.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

FOLLOWING WEEK-LONG futile talks in Washington, the Arab and Israeli delegations are now preparing for a second week of discussions within the 10th round of the peace process, said Al-Naba daily Monday. The first week witnessed procrastination and stalling on the part of the Israeli teams, ending in no progress at all, said the daily. It was rather strange to hear the Israeli team making complaints, claiming that it is the Arab parties who impede a settlement when it is well-known that Israel's occupation of Arab land and its intransigent position constitute the stumbling block before any peace, the paper pointed out. If the Arabs are adhering to international legitimacy and demanding the implementation of U.N. resolutions, then they are truly committed to peace and do not in any form constitute an obstacle to it, continued the daily. It said that over the past 20 months the Israelis have been prevaricating and resorting to various methods to prevent direct practical discussion over the end of occupation and the exchange of land for peace. Israel's false claims and futile attempts to delay the establishment of peace based on justice, said the paper, can by no means give impetus to the peace process or help the two sides attain a settlement.

A COLUMNIST in Al-Dustour discussed the outcome of the Jordanian economic conference held at the University of Jordan in the past week, and said that the huge problems facing the national economy justify such a meeting and others that should be held later in this regard. Mohammad Daoud said that the working papers reviewed by the economists and the specialists revealed divergent views concerning the appropriate means for dealing with the various aspects of the economy and its problems. Citing some of these problems, the writer said the indebtedness and unemployment were among the main priorities that require solution and these were not fully explored in one conference. A series of meetings should be organised later to handle each issue pertaining to the economy so that the economists and the decision-makers in responsible positions can find a common ground for solutions based on the economists' ideas and recommendations, said the writer. Further meetings of these specialists should be given due consideration because they are bound to help the country handle its economic affairs in a better and more comprehensive manner, suggested the writer. The writer said that the private sector ought to be consulted and involved fully in such matters because, he said, this sector does not only have vast experience in economic matters, but also has the power and the skill to help find solutions to the unemployment problem.

The View From Fourth Circle

Flaws in the circus and the circusmaster

The World Human Rights Conference being held in Vienna this week under United Nations auspices is a veritable circus, a peculiar beast both threatening and hopeful from our perspective as a small, developing country. The hopeful element is that everyone in the world agrees that human rights are a good thing and should be assured to all people, though many cultures or governments disagree on the exact definition of human rights. The threatening element is that northern/western industrialised states may be trying to use human rights as a convenient banner under which to interfere in the internal affairs of developing countries, and to maintain exploitative political/economic relationships that suit northern/western materialism (while making intellectual pretzels out of northern/western morality).

The main controversy at Vienna and elsewhere seems to be the debate about whether human rights are universal or should be tailored to particular national cultures and traditions — an unfortunate and diversionary debate, in my view, because the real issues at stake are so much broader than this. Of course human rights are universal, but at the same time they must be defined and applied in a manner that is appropriate to any single country's cultural traditions, values, and current socio-economic condition. Would the United States object if a Singapore-type top-heavy leadership took power in Somalia today and revived economic life? Probably not, because the imperative of economic revival and national coherence in this case overrides the niceties of total political freedom.

The West's focus on legal and political rights of individuals clashes with most of the South's cultural emphasis on the concept of collective identity and the assurance of a person's civic, economic and human rights through a more communal structure. This is not to judge which is a better system, but only to recognise the very powerful and politically valid cultural distinctions that distinguish cultures from one another.

It is irksome, however, to find the north/west once again pontificating to the rest of the world about the importance of applying their definition of human rights as a universal standard. This was succinctly articulated by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who told the Vienna gathering: "We cannot let cultural relativism become the last refuge of repression."

This may be a good sound bite and headline quote, but it's lousy politics and faulty reasoning — in other words, just about what we would expect from the United States on the human rights issue at this stage of the evolving global situation. It's lousy and faulty because it denies the vitality of the struggle for human rights in much of the developing world. It ignores the fact that the United States and its European sidekicks have supported and are still supporting most of the developing countries that are seen as lagging in human rights and it betrays cultural presumptuousness and political arrogance that can only sour the human rights debate rather than move it forward on the path of success we all seek. Our reply to Mr. Christopher is that we cannot let human rights become the latest transnational camouflage for the West's neocolonial exploitation, hypocritical diplomatic expediency and cultural pomposity.

From our perspective, the human rights issue is rather rich, and complex. Human rights demands have generated great passion and political activism in the Arab/Islamic World in recent years, mainly as weapons in the struggle against three perceived oppressors: domestic autocratic regimes, regional occupying powers and foreign super-powers (all of whom broadly reflect American/western political goals or rely on American/western aid — is it any wonder, therefore, that the U.S. and some of its European allies should be so concerned and defensive about their legacy around the world?).

The formal human rights movement in the Middle East was born in the early 1980s, when the Arab Organisation for Human Rights was established by a handful of intellectuals and activists to be followed by national bodies and Amnesty International chapters in Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon and other

countries. These groups focused on improving human rights conditions in their own countries, emphasising the rights of association, free speech, political expression and activism, and fair trials, and struggling against inhuman practices such as torture and detention without trial.

Parallel to this, Arab/Islamic activists have long fought against the human rights abuses of Israel in the Arab territories it has occupied since 1967 — but to little avail, because Israel's overwhelming U.S. support has allowed it to ignore both Arab protestations and dozens of U.N. resolutions criticising its human rights record.

In the last five years, however, the human rights debate in the Middle East has taken on new dimensions, mainly as a response to the Arab perception that western powers are blatantly using human rights as an excuse to interfere in the domestic affairs of weaker countries. As was highlighted during the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis, most Middle Eastern countries feel that the U.S.-led western world expediently uses human rights standards, U.N. resolutions and other legalistic or humanitarian criteria in a selective and whimsical manner — stressing human rights when it suits western interests, but ignoring them when the interests of Third World countries are at stake.

A glaring example of this is the contrast between western policies in northern Iraq and Bosnia; the West intervened fiercely and continues to provide protection to Kurds in northern Iraq because this has been deemed (temporarily) useful to the West's anti-Saddam Hussein strategy, but the West moves with much more caution and much less speed and force to protect Bosnians who are dying and suffering en masse. Several Arab countries that joined the anti-Iraq coalition in the Gulf war (Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Morocco, Pakistan) have been repeatedly criticised by Amnesty, the U.S. State Department, the European Community and others for their human rights abuses, to the apparent disdain of western powers who claimed to fight Iraq on the basis of "principles".

Most people in the Middle East reject the narrow Anglo-Saxon emphasis on the civil and political rights of individuals, arguing that the western genesis of human rights as protection for individuals against the tyranny of the state is only partially relevant in the rest of the world. Most developing societies certainly do suffer domestic rights denials, but the main source of their oppression, exploitation, underdevelopment, or even national collapse in the last century and a half has been from foreign (mainly western) powers who have either manufactured the states of the south or exploited them through support for autocratic regimes. From our perspective, therefore, it is grossly ironic that the same world powers that are a leading source of the national distress and fragility of the developing world should emerge suddenly as the good guys who seek to drive the human

rights bandwagon. I smell a rat.

Arab and Islamic societies view human rights issues as a combination of individual civil and political rights as well as collective national or communal rights. They define human rights in a much broader perspective that must assure entire societies, such rights as those of sovereignty and self-determination, independence, non-interference in their internal affairs by strong foreign powers, the rights to economic development and the conquest of poverty and debt, a clean environment, and an end to foreign occupation, racism, apartheid, ethnic cleansing, and xenophobia.

The Islamic religion and Arab social traditions also aim to assure the individual's right within his or her broader communal context, such as the family, the tribe or clan, or the modern state. This argument says that the West's excessive focus on individualism is a main cause of the breakdown of the family and the rise in violence and serious social problems.

Therefore, the Arab and Islamic World largely line up with the rest of the Third World in demanding three main things: an expanded definition of human rights that takes in collective communal and national concerns alongside individual legal/political rights, a universal application of human rights standards without discrimination or selectivity, and more stringent monitoring and implementation mechanisms that are not susceptible to superpower manipulation.

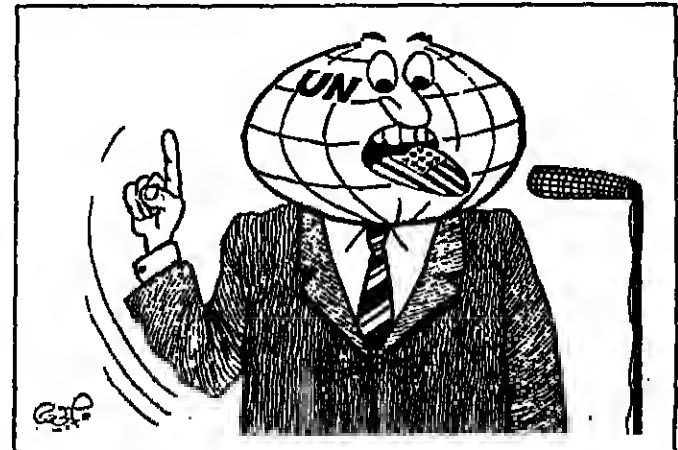
One new fear now is that new implementation mechanisms for human rights will be placed in the hands of U.N. agencies that can be easily controlled by the U.S. and other powers. The mechanisms to strengthen impartial and effective implementation of human rights standards around the world will be crucial to the future of the human rights movement. Many of us around here are dubious about some proposals such as a U.N. high commissioner for human rights or an ombudsman, because these could easily be manipulated by superpowers working through the U.N. Security Council. The new structures for human rights implementation must reflect the universality of the international order, and not the dominant influence of a few powers.

Many Arabs and Muslims share the fear that the human rights question in the 1990s may go the same way as the debate on the international economic order in the mid-1970s, which was scuttled by the West because it did not suit its commercial imperatives. That breakdown led to the massive debt crisis of the last decade and grinding poverty in many developing states; the same may happen on the political level if the South's concerns on human rights are not respected and taken into consideration today. There is also fear amongst us that human rights, like the environment, may be used by the West as an excuse to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states.

Human rights standards should be a force for common global action for the good of all people. It would be a shame to allow the human rights potential to wither away and die in ideological battle. At the same time, it would be a catastrophe for the developing world to lie down and roll over before the self-appointed American circusmaster. It would be a good start to free the human rights debate from the grip of governments and allow it to find its course amongst non-governmental organisations and concerned ordinary people.

The deadly combination of governments and the United Nations is not a good sign for human rights trends because western governments will only repeat their self-serving exploitation of the U.N. as they did in the Gulf crisis and most Third World governments have been proven to be autocratic, incompetent or illegitimate in the eyes of their people. The U.N./government combination has already badly damaged the global environment and the economy and it should not be allowed to do the same to human rights issues.

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Critical week for Nigeria after poll result clamp

By John Owen-Davies
Reuters

LAGOS — Nigeria has entered a critical week that could determine whether the military will step aside for an elected president in August or extend its decade at the helm.

After arguably the most free and fair presidential poll ever held in Nigeria on June 12, baffled and upset Nigerians still await final results from military President Ibrahim Babangida's electoral commission (NEC).

Many Nigerians deeply concerned for their country's future say only swift government action can assuage mounting anger following an abrupt cut in the flow of official poll results.

A bizarre series of events in the most dramatic few days since Gen. Babangida foiled a coup attempt in April 1990 has also raised major questions.

Does, for example, the army want to cling to power despite repeated assertions to the contrary? Why did the government become entangled in a legal mess when it had a ready-made escape route used to ensure that the June

12 poll went ahead?

"Nigeria is on the brink of disaster today. (This) week will decide whether we enter a new dawn or doom and destruction," said Remi Fani-Kayode, a highly respected legal expert.

"That decision is in the hands of Professor Humphrey Nwosu now," he said in a statement obtained by Reuters.

NEC boss Nwosu stunned Nigerians Wednesday by bowing to a court order, won by advocates of extended army rule, to halt the results when Muslim business tycoon Moshood Abiola was winning.

It was an extraordinary about-face by Mr. Nwosu after he brushed aside a similar court ruling seeking to stop the actual poll, citing a military decree saying no court could halt the process.

His latest action triggered a spate of potentially time-consuming counter-suits demanding the immediate release of results in high courts in some of Nigeria's 30 states.

Several western ambassadors say they have been assured by the government it will try to deal quickly with legal issues and that Gen. Babangida's planned August 27 handover date is unchanged.

But some politicians are not so sure, pointing to a lack of any overt legal moves from the government side last Thursday and Friday before a weekend break.

Iyorehia Ayo, president of the elected senate, and House of Representatives speaker Agunwa Anaekwe urged General Babangida to order the NEC to release results without delay in the "interest of unity, peace and stability".

Mr. Abiola, whose Social Democratic Party (SDP) controls both national assembly houses, declared himself the poll winner on Friday and urged Gen. Babangida to order the NEC to give the outcome "to safeguard the corporate existence of our beloved country".

Bashir Tafa, Mr. Abiola's rival, has kept a low profile. Many

Nigerians believe he lost an unique opportunity to concede defeat last Monday when official results from 14 of Nigeria's 30 states put him in an almost hopeless position.

Some members of Mr. Tafa's embittered National Republican Convention (NRC) have issued demands to the NEC, including that Mr. Abiola be disqualified and fresh elections held.

Uncertainty has added to unease in Mr. Abiola's mainly Christian western bastion and in the largely Muslim north, Mr. Tafa's region.

"As a citizen, I am very much concerned about the situation in the country," said Yusuf Maitama Sule, a senior member of the previous 1960-66 and 1979-83 republics toppled in coups amid charges of corruption, poll fraud and engendering rivalries.

So far, peaceful demonstrations by NRC members have been reported in northern Kano, Niger and Sokoto states. Kano

was the scene of bloody sectarian and ethnic violence in 1991.

Tension has also been fanned partly by the inability of some politicians and their followers to accept defeat in a nation nearly torn apart by rivalries in the 1967-70 Biafran civil war.

"Nigeria is presently on the verge of chaos and the NRC could easily lend itself to be used as an instrument of destruction if it does not accept defeat now," said Mahmud Waziri, an NRC presidential hopeful in aborted primaries last year.

In Kano, where Mr. Abiola beat Mr. Tafa on his home turf, trader Yusuf Ojo said: "We will never accept defeat. We believe Tafa did not lose. We will go to any length to ensure that either the result is cancelled or fresh elections are called."

Many northerners were stung by signs that the presidency was going to be wrested from their grasp after providing almost all Nigeria's leaders since independ-



Ibrahim Babangida

ence from Britain in 1960. Both parties were created by the army for its civilian rule programme, already delayed three times.

The tragedy of Gaza in one family

By Robert Mahoney
Reuters

JABALYA, Gaza Strip — Mohammad Al Kurdi is a strapping former wrestler.

But today he sits slumped and sobbing as he tells how he lost his baby son to an army bullet, his job to an army closure of the occupied territories and a family home to army dynamite.

For Mr. Kurdi, the resumption of Middle East peace talks in Washington this month and Israeli promises of better conditions in the territories are an irrelevance.

A huge photograph of his 20-month-old son Fares looks down on the sparsely-furnished room of his cinder-block house in Jabalya refugee camp in the Gaza Strip.

He was standing beside Fares on May 16 when a soldier spun around and fired a bullet without warning into the toddler's chest. The army said the soldier was aiming at stone-throwers.

Fares was the 34th child under

16 to be killed by soldiers in five months, a toll unprecedented in the five-year-old Arab uprising against Israeli occupation.

"The army commander came here and apologised," said Mr. Kurdi, his head in his hands. "I asked him why did they do that, why don't they leave us alone?"

"They took away my job, then my son... they apologised but even until today they will not give me a permit (to work in Israel) because they fear I will take revenge for the killing of my baby," Mr. Kurdi said. "Nobody has suggested this is the reason but I understand Israelis, for them security is everything."

Would he seek revenge? "I don't know what to do. It is hard to express to you the feeling I would have if I went to Israel again and saw Jews," Mr. Kurdi said. "(But) I have to work there. There are no jobs in Gaza."

Mr. Kurdi, like tens of thousands of Palestinians, lost his job in Israel 11 weeks ago when the government sealed off the occupied territories after attacks on Jews.

It has since gradually eased some restrictions to prevent an eruption of poverty-driven unrest but only about a quarter of the 40,000 Gazans who worked in Israel before the closure have been allowed back to their jobs.

"I go every day to the (army-run) civil administration to ask for a permit," said Mr. Kurdi, 37, who had worked for 15 years on Israeli construction sites earning up to \$40 a day.

"I have signed up for street sweeping," he said, referring to a government make-work project brought in since the closure. "But I don't know if I'll be hired." The government pays each man \$9 a day for a maximum of two weeks

to shovel sand and garbage off the streets or dig cable trenches.

Like many Palestinians, Mr. Kurdi has sold his wife's gold jewellery, a traditional form of savings, and he has run up a debt of \$3,000 since April.

"People I have borrowed from do not want to lend me any more money but we are borrowing to eat," he said.

In better times his father-in-law, who is also his uncle, might have helped. But 73-year-old Zaki Murad has been camping in a tent in his sand-blown garden in Gaza City since the army dynamited his house and his savings on April 20.

Mr. Murad lived with three of his married sons in the home which sappers blasted as part of what the army called a search for wanted men. Mr. Murad, like scores of other Palestinians who have had their homes destroyed

during "searches" in the last six months, called the army action collective punishment.

"There were no wanted men in our house. The army knew that. They just wanted to take revenge on us as Arabs," Mr. Murad said. The army blew up 22 houses and apartments in the neighbourhood that day.

Mr. Murad's eyes well with tears as he shows a photograph of his slain grandson, Fares. "You know, they would not let my wife back in to the house to get our money," he said. "It burned."

The money, about \$30,000 in cash, was what was left from an insurance pay-out he received after being run over by a car. His legs are 80 per cent paralysed and he no longer has the money to pay for physiotherapy.

"After this," he said, nodding towards the rubble of his home, "they took away our baby. I can't

stand it."

"Maybe the peace talks will lead somewhere. I wish we could get rid of this war," he sighed.

His son-in-law has no time for the 19-month-old talks. "They will lead nowhere," Mr. Kurdi said bitterly. "We want a Palestinian state but we are weak, the Israelis are strong. Why should they give up anything?"

"They have made us dependent on them and keep us dependent... My child came to ask me: 'Why don't you buy us new clothes for the feast?' I couldn't answer him," Mr. Kurdi said, his eyes red with tears.

"No," he said, straightening up. "Fares was not the first child to be killed by the Israelis and he will not be the last. This situation will get worse because Israel does not want to leave Gaza... (and) our backs."



Decentralisation

First steps are taken in Egypt

By Katia Sabet

CAIRO — Housed on the 10th floor of the premises of the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry for Local Government looks like the most frugal government office in terms of the space that it occupies. Its concern for efficiency is also reflected in the small number of personnel it employs. In contrast to the over-manned offices of other institutions, each employee here knows exactly what to do and how to do it.

At the helm is Dr. Mahmoud Cherif, a famous surgeon who one day decided that the prophylactic and curative procedures of his profession could be applied to the state. He announced it himself, when journalists asked him rather sarcastically about the relationship between politics and surgery.

"No difference," the minister replied. "As a surgeon I cared for individuals, as a politician I will try to remedy the ills of society." Since he came to office two years ago, Dr. Cherif has worked relentlessly to implement his heavy programme. "Egypt is a unique country with a very particular kind of structure," he explained in a recent interview. "Often, nations come into being over the centuries by the unification of a certain number of independent states, whereas Egypt's system has been one of complete centralisation for 7,000 years. This was due to the clear need for the country to watch over the flood-

ing of the Nile and plan the irrigation of the land right from the far south to the northern Mediterranean coast."

In fact, Egypt was — in the past — a huge farm, controlled by an army of clerks and governed by a monarch with whom absolute power began and ended; 7,000 years of this system have obviously shaped mentality and customs. It is no simple matter to come today and try to decentralise by distributing parts of power and duties to the 26 regional governorates. The heaviest burden is borne by the Cairo area threatened daily by the suffocating influx of people who flock there to find work and housing, or simply to resolve some personal problem.

"The Egyptian must lose the instinct of turning to the capital each time he needs the authorities to take some action for whatever it may be," said Dr. Cherif. "This is what used to go on, but we have been trying to change that since 1961 when the decentralisation plan came into being. Thirty years on, we have laws — still to be refined — which give local authorities a lot of power," but the people's way of thinking has not changed.

The legislature and judiciary remain the prerogative of central government. In other areas, decentralisation is more subtle. For instance, the Al Azhar (the highest Islamic authority) retains its central links, while the Ministry of Religion which administers in-

alienable religious properties, has delegated its responsibilities to different local governments. The school curriculum is set by Cairo, but other educational components are left to the discretion of regional directors for education who are appointed by central government. In fact, every regional director is appointed by the relevant minister according to criteria which, according to Dr. Cherif, are changing fast. Instead of being made on the basis of social connections, these appointments are increasingly going to the most qualified.

"We want to see that professional staff are appointed within a scientific and pragmatic framework. That is why we are organising seminars and refresher courses at the Institute of Administrative Training for all levels of staff and for all provincial governors," said Dr. Cherif. "To date, 200 town leaders and 1,000 village leaders have followed courses of one to six weeks. Appointments, upgradings and promotions for such staff will now be linked to their performance during these seminars as much as to an overall appraisal of their achievements while in office."

The appraisal will be based on a report from the governor of the province and on a report from the civil servant himself. "It is not easy to write a good report about yourself if you do not have any tangible achievements... Only those who are really efficient and can point to their achievements

will be able to progress in their careers," said Dr. Cherif.

The ministry draws up a simple programme for the governorates, and the tasks for the civil servant are defined: extension of the supply of drinking water, rebuilding of access ways to villages so they can be reached even in bad weather, extension of the sewer system in all rural communities, encouragement of privatisation and financial and technical support to young people for setting up small businesses.

Dr. Cherif confirmed that headway had been made with privatising small government projects in the public sector, but now larger firms and projects need to be tackled. Drinking water is now available in almost all Egyptian villages, but the sewage system is in its infancy in rural areas.

The problem of sewage is very important in a country like Egypt where the Nile is the source and depository of all water. In a few years, the river could be severely polluted as a result of the demographic explosion, unless measures are taken now to treat dirty water which drains into the nearest canal and then reaches the Nile.

"Then, there is the budget to consider," said Dr. Cherif, smiling. "It is mainly centralised, but the current trend is towards increasing the income to governorates, so as to encourage their complete autonomy in this area."

Dr. Cherif is a fervent supporter of individual effort. Self-reliance has produced excellent re-

sults in many rural communities and is operated by collecting funds to finance a project for the public good. Each person contributes according to his means in a totally voluntary way. As a result, villages were able to install public telephones, repair dilapidated mosques, install a transformer to increase electrical current and set up modest sports clubs for young people.

"This is an excellent barometre for judging a community leader," said Dr. Cherif. "It goes without saying that the village leader who takes cover behind a lack of funds to justify his inertia is not the one who will be chosen to assume greater responsibility. The one to be promoted will have found money to improve the conditions in his village."

One of the main concerns for the minister is the alarming rate of unemployment among the young. Dr. Cherif believes that while there should be some state intervention, the process of liberalising the economy should not be impeded by the needs to cut unemployment.

Dr. Cherif aims to orient thousands of young graduates towards handicrafts and small businesses, since they cannot be provided with employment by the state as in the past. Four thousand workshops and small businesses have been set up and funded by the Social Development Fund. "Now we have arts graduates making bags, and business students producing copper

lamps under a system which takes the best of both private and public sectors," said Dr. Cherif.

Under this system, the young entrepreneurs receive advice on how to find outlets for their work and set up exhibitions. They are kept abreast of technological developments in their field and are given logistical support so they can export.

A recent controversial step in this process of decentralisation involved Egypt's psychiatric hospitals. The local press has accused the only hospitals of this kind in Egypt (Khanka and Abassieh) of showing their patients the door. "No mentally ill patient will be discharged before a place is found in one of six new establishments just opened in different provinces," Dr. Cherif stated. "In fact, 26 new hospitals are scheduled to be built for the mentally ill and will be spread across the country."

Unlike other politicians, Dr. Cherif does not advocate a transfer en masse of the ministries from Cairo to a new town as part of a policy to relieve Cairo. He considers that if decentralisation is well understood and applied it will be more efficient than any ministerial move.

"Decentralisation involves relieving the pressure on the ministries to enable them to concentrate on strategic planning," said Dr. Cherif. "It is essential to have all the ministries in one location — Cairo — to ensure a close cooperation. But, by delegating a



Dr. Mahmoud Cherif, minister for local government, advocates entrepreneurship to encourage communities to solve their own problems (W/NL)

good portion of discretionary powers to the regions, all those who used to come to Cairo to resolve their problems should now be able to get satisfaction from their local authorities. The programme is an ambitious one considering Egypt's history, but the man handling the job is both energetic and well-qualified. What Egyptians will find, however, is that autonomy is a tricky business and much more difficult to shoulder than absolute power — World News Link.

Coral reefs suffer from human touch, experts say

By Jim Loney

Reuters

MIAMI — Oil spills, overfishing, tourism and deliberate destruction are ruining some of the world's spectacular coral reefs, marine biologists say.

Fears about the fate of these fragile marine habitats were expressed at a symposium attended by more than 100 leading experts in Miami this month.

"In areas where people are using the reefs or where there is a large population, there are significant declines in coral reefs," said the meeting's organizer Dr. Robert Ginsberg, marine geology professor at the University of Miami.

Coral reefs are fragile geological marvels created by polyps, tiny animals which absorb calcium carbonate from sea water and excrete limestone, from which the reefs are made.

The ornate, visually stunning structures are vital for the health of surrounding waters. They host microscopic organisms on which larger creatures feed and provide shelter for fish, lobsters, octopus, eels, turtles and other marine life.

Coral polyps survive only in tropical and subtropical regions and need the proper combination of light, warm and pure water to thrive.

Although the amount of damage is relatively small — "probably less than a few per cent," said Ginsberg — the reefs affected are the ones that are regularly visited by fishermen and tourists and those susceptible to polluted run-off from cities or farms.

Among the experts' findings: — Reefs in the Caribbean — one of the world's most heavily visited areas — have been severely damaged.

— In the Florida Keys, site of the only coral reef in mainland North America, disease is killing coral.

Scientists are unsure what causes the ailments but they believe changes in water quality because of on-shore development and toxic run-off from farmland may be responsible.

At least six shipwrecks in the past decade have crushed areas (hectares) of the delicate corals, which grow at a rate of two to 10 centimetres a year.

— In the Gulf of Aqaba, a decade of oil spills from heavy ship traffic produced "chronic pollution" which damaged the reefs. The reefs in the Gulf and the Red Sea are in danger of

"In the Gulf of Aqaba, a decade of oil spills from heavy ship traffic produced chronic pollution which damaged the reefs. The reefs in the Gulf and the Red Sea are in danger of overuse. The population is increasing, the number of tourists is increasing and the pressure on the reefs is very high."

overuse. "The population is increasing, the number of tourists is increasing and the pressure on the reefs is very high," said Yossi Loya, a professor of ecology at Tel Aviv University.

The area around Eilat in Israel is undergoing a tourist boom, Mr. Loya said. Much of the shoreline is covered with hotels, marinas and port facilities.

"There is very little space left for nature," he said. "The major

impact I see in the future is the high population density."

— In parts of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean, native peoples use coral as a construction material.

"In the Maldives they have no building materials so they build their houses of pieces of coral and they just go out and rip up pieces of the reef," Mr. Ginsberg said.

— On Australia's 1,930 kilometre Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest and most carefully managed, the worst damage is near the towns of Cairns and Townsville.

"The damage is certainly near the centres of human population, near the centres of human activity," said Wendy Craik, an official with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park authority.

Ms. Craik said the greatest dangers appeared to be gradual changes in water quality caused by pollution from cities and farms. "There are a lot of reefs nowhere near human activity that are in really good shape," she said.

Mr. Loya said tourism was the real threat to reefs in the Gulf of Aqaba and he had a message for tourism operators.

"If they are not going to promote conservation of the reefs... they're simply killing the goose that laid the golden egg," he said.

Modesty forbids paintstripping Michelangelo's figures

By Patricia Clough

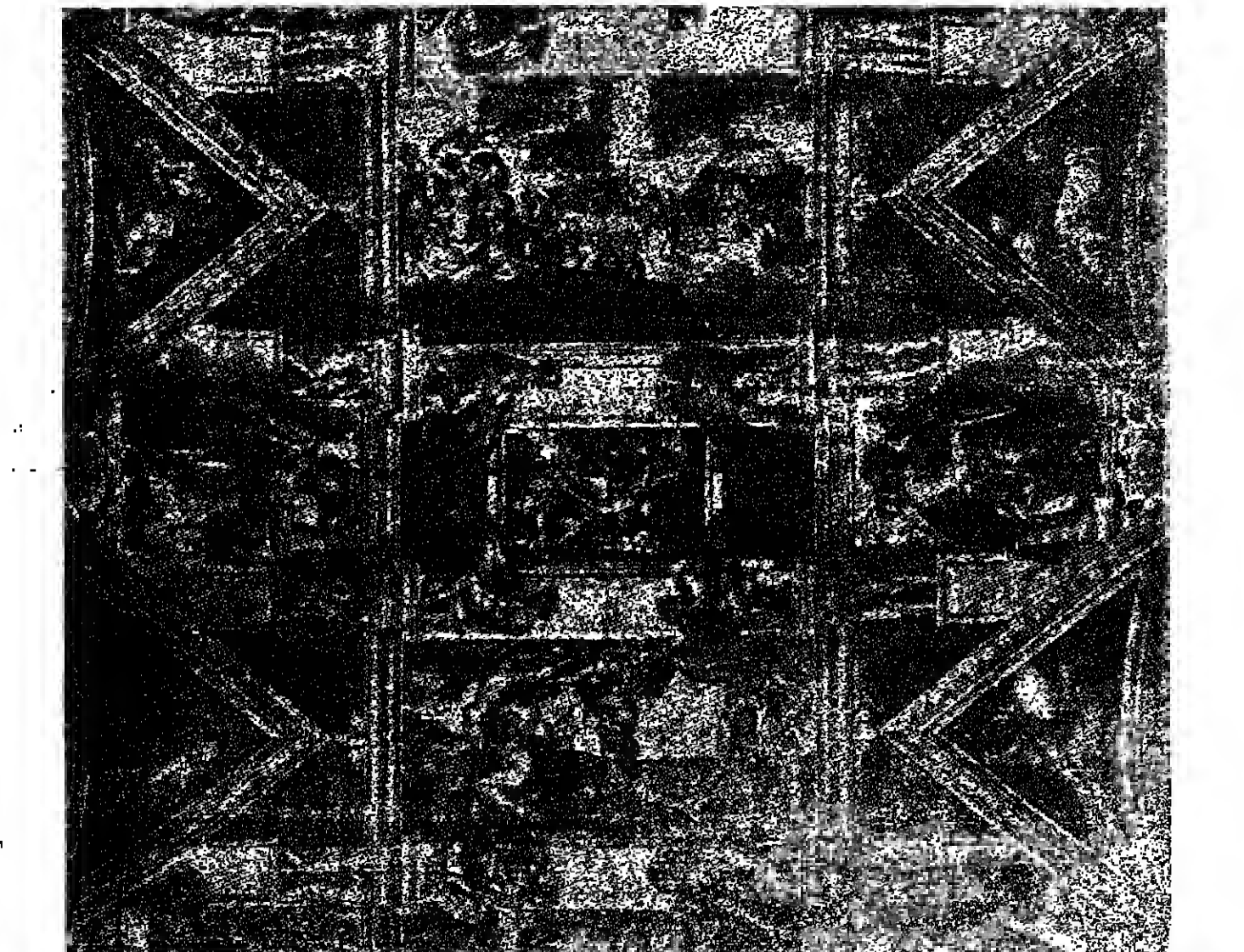
ROME — The most famous articles of underwear in the world, those painted on to the nude figures of Michelangelo's great fresco of the Last Judgement over the altar of the Sistine Chapel, will not be removed in the current restoration of the painting, Vatican authorities have decided.

Contemptuously referred to as "breaches" in Rome over the past four centuries, they are actually floating draperies painted in to hide the more private areas of the stupendous figures of Christ and those being judged, on the orders of scandalised Vatican officials. Michelangelo had painted them naked, to express truth and the eternity of the human soul, but a few years later the Renaissance spirit gave way to the oppressive Counter-Reformation and Inquisition. The Council of Trent ordered that all such works should be destroyed and Michelangelo had to knuckle under to the new prudery or see the fresco smashed.

Now the long-distant successors of those officials who are presiding over the restoration of the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel have decided that the "breaches" should stay. Not solely out of prudishness, but partly because it has been discovered that the original paint was scraped away when the draperies were added in or around 1565. The world will never again see the fresco exactly as it was painted by Michelangelo. It would be possible to reconstruct the original, however, since there are contemporary copies still in existence.

But Gianluigi Colalucci, head of the Vatican Museum's restoration workshop, said: "The decision we took is of a historic nature, not an aesthetic one: we have chosen to respect the acts of the Council of Trent."

Rome would not be Rome without artistic controversy. Just as the original fresco had its opponents — Michelangelo painted the face of one, with ass's



The section of the Sistine Chapel roof which contains "The Fall and the Expulsion" (File photo)

ears, in Hell — now the restoration has its critics. "They say they wanted to bring back the work as it was when Michelangelo had just finished it," protested Toti Scialoja, painter and former head of Rome's Academy of Fine Arts. "Now, as well as the patina of time and the touchings-up of the artist, which should stay, why are they not taking away the breaches painted 20 years afterwards? Once again, modesty has prevailed" — The Independent.



Coral reefs, like these in the Gulf of Aqaba, are fragile marine habitats that are ruined by careless human touch (File photo)

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Kuwait legislators recommend investment authorities be independent

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait legislators should consider making state-owned investment authorities independent of government control, a parliament committee said in comments published Monday.

A report by the assembly's finance and economic affairs committee says the Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA), the state's investment arm, ought to operate on a purely technical basis and be removed from political influence, newspapers said.

State-owned KIA, whose chairman is the finance minister, oversees assets that have shrunk by more than half from their pre-Gulf war levels of about \$100 billion.

The fall is due largely to payment of large war-related expenses. But KIA's London arm, the Kuwait Investment Office (KIO) is suing former executives and advisers over alleged fraud and mismanagement following losses of \$4 billion in Spain.

Kuwaiti authorities have recently probed similar allegations against officials of other institutions including the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company and the Kuwait Real Estate Investment Company.

The committee, in a report on Kuwait's investment woes, said it feared the presence of the finance minister at the helm of the affairs of the KIA would make it vulnerable politically-motivated decisions, the newspapers said.

"This situation necessitates considering giving KIA independence so it can manage the country's funds on a purely technical and professional basis upon which the most appropriate decisions, including selection of employees, can be taken," the newspapers quoted the report as saying.

The report was referring to the office of finance minister and was not making a personal reference to the present incumbent Nasser Al Abdullah Al Rodhan.

"All board members with the sole exception of the managing director are part-timers who cannot devote enough time to the investments," the report was quoted as saying.

It said that because the finance minister oversaw the work of other KIA board members such as the governor of the central bank, their freedom to oppose his decisions about the KIA might be limited.

The report is due to be debated by the assembly Tuesday. Committee members could not immediately be contacted for comment on the reports.

The report blamed past and present governments for failing to select honest and competent people to manage foreign assets or monitor their performance adequately, the papers said.

"A number of financial and legal irregularities took place in the past and no actions were taken against them (offenders). It was found that there has been a catastrophe in the process of decision-making," it said.

Relations between the KIO and KIA ought to be well-regulated and respective areas of responsibility clearly defined.

Sheikh Rodhan had promised parliament he would take action on this last point within nine months.

The KIO had to be "kept away" from events surrounding Kuwaiti investments in Spain so as to "protect its financial reputation and good relations with various financial institutions."

A team should be formed to study what it called cracks in Kuwaiti investments in other parts of the world, notably the United States, Portugal and South East Asia, the report was quoted as saying.

Anani sees Jordan's future prosperity in export of services

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jawad Anani, Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs, made a somewhat revolutionary, out-of-script address at last week's economic symposium which was organised by the University of Jordan's Centre for Strategic Studies.

Dr. Anani told the audience that Jordan's private sector was small and carried little weight despite being trumpeted almost daily as being the Kingdom's economic power house.

He elaborated that the private sector per se was not as genuine as in other industrial countries, noting that many Jordanians have built up their wealth from contracting public sector projects.

The minister said Jordan's public sector was by far the largest employer as 44 per cent of the country's workforce are civil servants. Should other semi-governmental or quasi-public sector institutions be taken into consideration, the percentage of the workforce working in the "larger public sector" would be 65 per cent, he pointed out.

Given the size of the private sector and the dominance of the public sector, Dr. Anani said, it was time to formulate a Jordanian economic strategy, so solid that it does not get bent with every political event.

Noting that the Kingdom had followed economic guidelines drawn by the World Bank since the late 1950s, Dr. Anani told the audience that the recommendations of the international agency were now in total contradiction to those which were suggested by the bank in the past.

According to the minister, other issues that kept Jordan

unable to form a clear and stable economic course were the political and security considerations which were always a priority over pure economic thinking. As such, there have always been economic gaps and quite often various financial and economic shifting.

As an example Dr. Anani cited an event when a minister decided to nationalise the phosphate company to maximise income to the treasury.

"Jordan had never adopted a socialist market system but the developments that were taking place in neighbouring countries at that time somehow induced the minister to get more money from the phosphate company through nationalisation," Dr. Anani said, asserting that, at the time, the minister was not intending to shift Jordan into a Socialist country.

Dr. Anani did not mention the specific time of the aforementioned event but hinted at its occurrence during the intensive nationalisation moves in Syria and Iraq.

Aside from this political-economic relationship, Dr. Anani highlighted services as being by far the most promising economic fortune open for Jordan.

He said that no matter how much local input goes into Jordanian industrial products, the value added factor cannot ever reach that of services which, according to Dr. Anani, should be given the highest economic priority.

To defend his view, he pointed to the medical services and how it has developed into a prominent and highly valuable "Jordanian export service."

Dr. Anani concluded his address by calling for a deeper, more substantial and meaningful economic debate in daily papers. He said that what was being written and discussed was superficial and in no way touched core issues.

Investcorp arranges buyout of Thorn Lighting

MANAMA (R) — Bahrain's Investcorp Bank E.C. has arranged the acquisition of Thorn Lighting from Britain's largest music group, Thorn EMI PLC, for about £162 million (\$240 million), the two sides announced.

Investcorp has carved out a speciality of buying and selling Western companies with private Arab funds, and Thorn plainly wanted to return to its core businesses, music and electronic rentals.

As is typical with many of Investcorp's purchases, Thorn Lighting's management team, headed by chief executive Hamish Bryce, will be shareholders in the Thorn Lighting Group in partnership with Investcorp.

Thorn EMI will have 12 per cent. Investcorp will retain majority ownership of the company. It tends to maintain its holdings in the companies it buys out for several years, working with the management and seeking to improve company performance before selling it.

Thorn Lighting is one of the world's largest light fittings manufacturers. Investcorp said in a statement that Thorn Lighting had an excellent track record for growing profits even in recent times.

For the year ended March 31, its profit rose by more than 20 per cent to £16.7 million (\$24.8 million).

Tanzania's mines dig themselves out of hole

DAR ES SALAAM (R) — Tanzania's mining industry is digging itself out of a hole.

"We are a mineral-rich country. Seventy companies have not asked for prospecting licences for nothing," Stephen Bugaisa, commissioner for mineral resources, told Reuters.

He said companies prospecting for everything from gold to copper would cause a mining boom and reverse the decline in the sector after a quarter of a century of socialism.

Under World Bank-sanctioned reforms, broadly supported by Western donors, Tanzania is encouraging investment in mines which suffered from neglect under former president Julius Nyerere.

De Beers of South Africa and two British companies, Reunion Mining PLC and Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ) had been given mining licences in the past year, Mr. Bugaisa said.

He said small-scale local miners had contributed substantially to economic output — 16 per cent of the gross national product (GNP) in 1992.

This was a rise from mining's 0.4 per cent of GNP in 1985, 8.5

per cent in 1990 and 12 per cent in 1991.

Mr. Bugaisa said with proper mining machinery and tools, Tanzania could produce up to 30 grammes of gold per tonne, compared to two grammes per tonne being produced in South Africa. Last year small-scale miners produced 4.52 tonnes of gold worth \$49.72 million. "We expect to get six tonnes this year," he said.

Tanzania realised \$51.2 million from minerals last year, up from \$26.3 in 1990, the commissioner said.

Mr. Bugaisa said diamonds also have a bright future with the prospects of exploiting more than 400 known kimberlite pipes in the country.

Other base metals, he said, have been found in northwestern Tanzania. These include nickel, cobalt and copper. They are located in the Kagera region, on the western shores of Lake Victoria.

Three companies, Sutton Resources (U.S.), Romanex (Canada) and BHB (multi-national) have already been licensed to prospect in the region," Mr. Bugaisa said.

Zimbabwe economy could fall again in '93

HARARE (R) — Zimbabwe's biggest bank has warned that the country's economy, which slumped 10 per cent last year, could decline again in 1993 because of unfavourable conditions locally and abroad.

Standard Chartered Bank said a price crash for Zimbabwe's tobacco, its largest export earner, and the hesitant recovery of industrialised nations from recession suggested the economy could shrink by one per cent this year.

Zimbabwe's flue-cured tobacco has been fetching an average of 93 U.S. cents a kilogramme since the auction floors opened for this year's crop in April — half last year's average.

Officials blame the price crash on oversupply of tobacco on world markets, the recession and high state taxes imposed on cigarettes worldwide.

"Indeed another year of decline is a very real possibility, given the preponderance of

domestic and global economic situations," Standard Chartered said in its May "Business Trends" report.

Zimbabwe's economy fell sharply last year in the face of the worst drought in living memory and the longest recession since the 1930s. Economists had forecast a modest recovery of about three per cent this year.

The bank said high interest rates of about 40 per cent, lack of foreign investors and some state policies such as the government takeover of productive farms to resettle landless people would militate against economic growth.

It forecast that Zimbabwe's dollar, which depreciated 14 per cent against most major currencies in the first quarter of 1993, would have to be devalued further later this year or early next year to narrow inflation differentials between Zimbabwe and its main trading partners.

Iran improves transport links with Central Asian republics

CRANS-MONTANA, Switzerland (AP) — Iran is upgrading road, rail and other links with neighbouring former parts of the Soviet Union, promoting itself as the natural partner in their bid for closer economic ties to the West.

Iran has built or is building new border crossings and frontier river bridges with its northern neighbours and is upgrading roads and

rail lines, Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said.

Many of the improved links are with Turkmenistan to the east, a gateway to the Muslim Central Asian republics of the former Soviet empire.

A rail line from the Turkmenistan border at Sarakhs to the eastern Iranian city of Meshed will give the Central Asian coun-

tries passenger and cargo access through Iran to the Persian Gulf by late 1994, Mr. Velayati told a business forum.

Iran is also improving sea, air and telecommunications links with the region, he said.

Iran and Turkey, a secular Muslim state, are vying for influence in Central Asia since the republics gained independence

after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

In an apparent warning to Turkey, Mr. Velayati said "all of us should observe the sovereignty of these republics. We should not interfere in the internal affairs of these countries."

The Central Asian republics — Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan

and Uzbekistan — joined Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan in the Tehran-based Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) last November. Afghanistan also joined them.

Nearly 300 million people live in the 10 countries.

ECO's Secretary-General Shamsah Ahmad of Pakistan urged Western countries not to

view the group as a "hostile economic block" because of its Muslim orientation.

The Central Asian republics were among the poorest parts of the former Soviet Union, providing wheat, cotton and minerals.

A pipeline project to pump natural gas from Turkmenistan through Iran and Turkey to Europe is under study.

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. \$1,000 costs	1.2743/48	Canadian dollar
	1.6907/17	Deutschmarks
	1.8970/80	Dutch guilders
	1.5038/48	Swiss francs
	34.68/69	Belgian francs
	5.6700/50	French francs
	1533/1536	Italian lire
	111.20/30	Japanese yen
	7.5400/500	Swedish crowns
	7.1250/350	Norwegian crowns
	6.4600/700	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.4825/35	
One ounce of gold	\$369.50/369.90	

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Japan's political upheaval gives birth to new party

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's political upheaval gave birth to a new party Monday after prompting a wave of nervous selling in financial markets of ruling conservative party rebels pushed the idea of a coalition with the opposition.

Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, meanwhile, picked two trusted senior members of his own faction and another loyal group to replace two ministers who betrayed him Friday by crossing the floor to vote with the opposition.

The two ministers had both resigned earlier to join former Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata and other LDP rebels in supporting a no-confidence motion, forcing Mr. Miyazawa to dissolve the lower house and call a snap July 18 election.

The new party formed Monday, known as the Sakigake or Pioneer Party, comprises 10 disenchanted members of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Masayoshi Takemura, a 58-year-old former mayor of Yokaiichi in western Japan who has served only two terms in the lower house, told a news conference that the group was devoted

to "political ethics and political reform."

He hinted that the group might support the small but increasingly popular Japan New Party, launched by another LDP rebel a year ago.

But he said it would not support the dissident faction led by Mr. Hata who plans to announce the formation of another new party Wednesday, bringing together 35 LDP members of the lower house and nine from the upper house.

Mr. Hata is being groomed for the post of prime minister and his faction already seems to have the support of the biggest opposition group, the Social Democratic Party. Analysts are now seriously considering the increasing chance of the LDP losing its untruncated 38-year grip on power.

"We will support the candidate that reformers can back unanimously," party Chairman Sadao Yamahana declared Monday.

Hirohata Akamatsu, the party's secretary general, had already mooted the idea of an opposition coalition Sunday, saying that his party had no plans

to try and grab "the most important posts" in such a government.

Mr. Miyazawa, meanwhile, put a brave face on the coming poll. "It is regrettable that we will face the general election under these circumstances but he pledge to devote body and soul to meet people's expectations," he told reporters. "We will do our utmost to remain the ruling party."

Japan's financial markets were spooked and a wave of nervous selling slashed share prices, bond prices and the value of the yen. The Nikkei Stock Average lost three per cent of its value, plummeting 592.11 points to 19,212.43 points, its lowest level in four months. The fall was almost as sharp as the Nikkei's overall decline for the whole of last week and marked the steepest one-day drop so far this year.

"We had expected the market to resume its upward momentum once the dissolution of the lower house was announced," a broker said. "But investors' fears over the political instability turned out to be stronger than expected."

The yen plunged against the dollar, amid rumours that American fund managers were dumping Japanese shares and signalling an end to a recent rally which had propelled the Japanese currency to a series of post-war highs.

Mr. Miyazawa picked Osamu Takatori to replace Hajime Funada as director general of the Economic Planning Agency. Mr. Takatori, 64, has previously served as lower-house Budget Committee chairman and director general of the Management and Coordination Agency under former Prime Minister Noboru Takeshita.

The beleaguered premier also chose Shochi Watanabe to succeed Mamoru Takijima. Mr. Watanabe, 63, a former chairman of the lower-house Education Committee, has also held two vice ministerial posts including home affairs.

Mr. Watanabe is from Mr. Miyazawa's own faction while Mr. Takatori is from the remnants of the Takeshita faction which split in December when Mr. Hata formed his group.



A policeman and a fireman Monday prepare a blanket to cover the body of a car bomb blast victim in Madrid (AFP photo)

7 die in Madrid car bomb attacks

MADRID (AFP) — Seven people were killed and 21 wounded Monday when two car bombs exploded in central Madrid in what Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez condemned as "terrible outrages" against the armed forces.

Police blamed the Basque separatist group ETA for the bombings, which occurred within a few hundred metres of each other in the busy Salamanca district during the morning rush-hour.

The first car bomb exploded under a bridge as a military van was passing, killing two lieutenant colonels, three soldiers and two civilians, police said.

Most of the injured were pedestrians or people inside a car.

The second bomb went off near the French ambassador's residence and wounded four people,

two seriously.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility, but ETA traditionally makes such admissions weeks afterwards.

The first blast, which shattered window panes in a radius of several hundred metres was caused by 40 kilograms of high explosive, Madrid Mayor Jose Maria Alvarez Del Manzano said.

Speaking at the European Summit in Copenhagen, Mr. Gonzalez said he was "convinced" that ETA was behind the attacks, which came two weeks after the prime minister was reelected in a general election.

"I can only add that it is a terrible blow to the armed forces," said Mrs. Gonzalez, whose Socialist Workers' Party lost its overall majority in the polls.

ETA last bombed Madrid on Nov. 30 last year, killing a policeman, and in February, 1992, killed five persons, including four soldiers.

Analysts here said they believed ETA has carried out Monday's attacks to show that it had not been crushed by police raids in March 1992, which ousted most of the underground group's leadership, including ETA chief Francisco Garmendia.

Anti-terrorist police sources said those arrests provoked a tactical dispute within ETA between hardliners wanting to pursue terrorism and moderates wishing to abandon it.

In the past two weeks Mr. Gonzalez has been holding talks with Basque and Catalan parties in the hope of bringing them into a coalition government.

Azeri parliament urges president to return; rebels wait outside Baku

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Azerbaijan's parliament appealed to President Abulfaz Elchibey Monday to return to Baku and resume the duties it said he abandoned when he fled the capital Friday. ITAR-TASS News Agency said.

TASS said an emergency session of parliament had also called on rebel leader Suret Huseynov, whose forces are encamped on the edge of Baku, to take measures to prevent any division of the nation.

Parliamentary Chairman and former Communist leader Geidar Aliyev has been exercising effective control in Baku since Mr. Elchibey, faced with a mutiny by troops loyal to Mr. Huseynov, fled to the enclave of Nakhichevan last week.

TASS said the parliamentary session ended after a few hours.

Forces outside Baku had said earlier in the day that they would not decide whether to advance

into Baku until they had heard the results of the session. It was not clear what the immediate reaction of Mr. Huseynov would be.

Mr. Aliyev told lawmakers the beginning of the meeting he had spoken by telephone with Mr. Elchibey and asked him to attend the session, the Azerbaijani News Agency, Touran, reported.

Mr. Aliyev said Mr. Elchibey, who fled to his home region of Nakhichevan Friday fearing for his safety, indicated he would not return before rebel troops surrounding the capital withdrew.

The rebels are demanding Mr. Elchibey's resignation and the dissolution of parliament.

Commander Huseynov began his rebellion after being fired by Mr. Elchibey in February following a series of Azerbaijani military setbacks in the war with Armenians fighting for indepe-

dence of the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

According to the Interfax News Agency, parliamentarians attending the crisis session Monday would attempt to set up a "state council" which will strip Mr. Elchibey of his main powers.

Mr. Aliyev, who has been attempting to strike a deal with Commander Huseynov to end the crisis, aims to be made chairman of the new state council, Interfax said.

Mr. Aliyev said Sunday that Commander Huseynov would put forward concrete proposals for ending the crisis if he was made prime minister or given a top government post.

Mr. Elchibey, meanwhile, declared Monday in a statement released by the Turkish news agency, Anatolia, that he "has not resigned and doesn't plan to resign."

13 blacks killed in S. Africa attacks

DURBAN, South Africa (AFP) — At least 13 people were killed in a series of attacks in Natal province's troubled Murchison area late Sunday, police said Monday.

A local spokesman for the African National Congress (ANC), Dumisani Makhaye, said the dead were all ANC members.

Police spokesman Major Bala Naidoo said hooded men raided a house in the Lusaka district of Murchison Sunday evening, killing six people.

About an hour later, he said, attackers raided two houses in nearby Newtown, killing three people in one house and four in the other.

He said two people were injured and taken to a hospital. Meanwhile, ANC President Nelson Mandela and his chief political rival, Zulu Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi, met in Johannesburg Wednesday during a crucial week in South Africa's democracy talks.

On Friday, the 26 parties negotiating the country's future are expected to formalise a decision to hold non-racial elections on April 27 next year.

But a showdown looms Tuesday over a declaration at the talks on the suspension of the hardline Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) armed struggle.

The PAC, a party to the talks, is under mounting criticism for its refusal to renounce the activities of its guerrilla wing, the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA).

PAC Secretary-General Benny Alexander last week explained his group's decision to talk and fight at the same time by what he called "the Moses option."

"Moses talked to the Pharaoh," Mr. Alexander said, "but he still brought a plague of locusts down upon him."

Constitutional Development Minister Roelf Meyer, the chief government negotiator, was unimpressed.

He said Friday that the government would urge the negotiating council, which resumes its meetings Tuesday, to decide on whether parties that refuse to renounce armed struggle should be allowed to participate in the democracy talks.

PAC negotiator Patricia De Lille told the Star newspaper that her group would not sign the declaration but could accept an amended version providing for a "cessation of hostilities."

The clerics who organised Wednesday's meeting in Johannesburg between Mr. Mandela and Chief Buthelezi hope it will help quell the political violence that has claimed more than 15,000 lives in black townships since 1985.

National Peace Committee Chairman John Hall hailed the long-awaited meeting, to be chaired by Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his Methodist counterpart Stanley Mogaba, as a "major step in the right direction."

But two summits between Mr. Mandela and Chief Buthelezi in 1991 failed to have any significant effect on curbing the bloody rivalry between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party, especially in Chief Buthelezi's Natal power base where the two are engaged in a low-intensity civil war since 1987.

"I'm very sceptical that the meeting will make any difference to violence," said Professor Alf Watlender of the University of the Witwatersrand.

Hong Kong liaison talks resume

HONG KONG (AFP) — After a six-month hiatus, British and Chinese diplomats Monday resumed full regular consultations here on technical aspects of Hong Kong's return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997.

The three-day meeting of the Sino-British Joint Liaison Group (JLG) the first since December, was expected to focus on the use of military land in the colony and prospects for a ninth container shipping terminal.

"I very much hope we will be

able to do some useful business and have something to report at the end of the three days," British team leader Anthony Galsworthy said before the meeting started.

His Chinese counterpart, Guo Fengmin, voiced similar hopes for progress.

Later, Mr. Guo and Mr. Galsworthy left the meeting venue together, smiling and waving to press photographers but declined to comment on the talks.

The JLG is supposed to meet at least three times a year to review details of Hong Kong's transition to Chinese rule.

But it became a casualty of Chinese anger over Hong Kong Governor Chris Patten's proposals, unveiled last October, to extend the voting franchise for 1994 elections here without first consulting Peking.

The December meeting failed even to produce a joint communi-

Nigeria commission moves to end crisis

LAGOS (R) — The Nigerian Electoral Commission (NEC) filed a formal appeal Monday against a court order blocking official declaration of the winner of presidential elections on June 12.

Nigeria has been engulfed in political crisis and uncertainty following the court order, which put in doubt a plan by the ruling military to hand over to civilians after a decade.

The appeal was lodged with the federal court of appeal in Kaduna, Court Registrar Aliyu Mohammad told reporters in the city in Nigeria's mainly Muslim north. He gave no details.

Mr. Mohammad said a date for hearing the appeal against the High Court order issued last Tuesday in favour of advocates of continued military rule would probably be set immediately.

The High Court in Abuja, the federal capital, issued the order forcing the NEC to suspend announcement of poll results. Unofficial and incomplete returns then showed southern businessman Moshood Abiola was ahead of his sole rival, northern Bashir Tofa.

NEC Chairman Humphrey Nwosu bowed to the order Wednesday, an abrupt about-turn after he used a court decree to over-ride a similar ruling to stop the June 12 presidential election, the first since the army toppled the 19-83 republic.

Mr. Nwosu said last week NEC would also seek an accelerated hearing at the Abuja court on the substantive petition brought by a shadowy group wanting military President Ibrahim Babangida to stay in power until 1997.

With tension rising in Africa's most populous country at the weekend, Mr. Abiola, a millionaire Muslim from the mainly Christian south, warned Nigerians national unity was at risk from "elements" opposed to the end of military rule.

This country is in danger now, serious danger," he told Reuters at his ornate home in a Lagos suburb Sunday.

"The whole system has been subverted by those who are supposed to uphold it and that has very ominous implications," Mr. Abiola added.

Many prominent Nigerians, including politicians and legal experts, have urged NEC to announce the final results quickly to avoid possible chaos in a country hurt by sectarian and ethnic rivalries since independence from Britain in 1960.

ESCSA opens workshop on vital statistics

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCSA) Sunday opened a 5-day Western Asia Workshop on Strategies for Accelerating the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems, in Damascus, 20-24 June 1993.

Hosted by the Central Bureau of Statistics, office of the prime minister of Syria, the workshop forms part of an international programme for accelerating the improvement of the Vital Statistics and Civil Registration (VS/CR) Systems, endorsed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in February 1991.

The workshop aims at encouraging Western Asia countries to carry out improvements in their VS/CR systems. In this regard, the participants will focus on assessing the adequacy of national registration and vital statistics processes, coverage and reliability.

The workshop will suggest strategies for the improvement of vital statistics and civil registration systems in the participating countries.

The participants will seek ways and means of promoting the awareness of national vital statistics and civil registration systems in each participating country.

According to ESCWA Executive Secretary Sabah Bakajji, "the programme is aimed at mobilising international, regional and bilateral efforts, both technical and financial, to encourage and support developing countries in undertaking sound and constructive reforms with a view to accelerating the development and upgrading of their systems of civil registration and vital statistics; such systems should become one of the major elements in the establishment of a social and demographic database needed for population and development programmes in the countries of the ESCWA region."

As part of the implementation of the international programme for accelerating the improvement of the VS/CR systems, a series of workshops is being organised by the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSTAT) for the improvement of VS/CR systems, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the International Institute for Vital Registration and Statistics (IIVRS), which are co-sponsors of the programme.

A first workshop was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in December 1991 for 11 selected Latin American countries. Another is in preparation in China for countries of Eastern and Southern Asia, in late 1993.

About 50 participants with decision-making responsibilities have been invited from ESCWA countries as well as concerned regional and international organisations and other countries outside Western Asia.

Cambodia's CPP accepts poll result

PHNOM PENH (Agencies) — Cambodia's ruling party, which cried foul after losing last month's U.N.-organised elections, finally accepted the result Monday after winning a major role in an interim power-sharing government.

The Cambodian People's Party (CPP), in a statement on government radio, said it recognised the results "in the interests of national reconciliation, peace and stability."

The formerly Communist Party took 51 National Assembly seats to the FUNCINPEC Royalist opposition's 38 in the May 23-28 polls, but claimed the vote was rigged — a move seen by diplomats as a tactic to large a share of power as possible.

Last Friday, Prime Minister Hun Sen and FUNCINPEC leader Prince Norodom Ranariddh agreed to co-chair an interim government for up to three months while the Assembly drafts a new constitution.

The two former bitter enemies were holding more talks Monday. Over the weekend bridges were blown around Siem Reap, the chief town in the north, and the western city of Battambang, Cambodia's second largest.

On Sunday morning two bridges were blown up along route 5, 50 kilometres southeast of Battambang, cutting the town off from heavy trucks from the capital, U.N. official Michael Williams said Monday.

On Saturday evening a bridge was destroyed on Route 6, 30 kilometres northwest of Siem Reap.

French engineers with the U.N. peacekeeping force said they believed anti-tank mines were used in the successful attack, the second on the bridge in a week.

Both attacks took place in areas where the Khmer Rouge have been active recently. The Maoist guerrilla organisation abandoned a peace pact it signed in October 1991 and initially tried to disrupt the election, in which 90 per cent of registered voters took part.

On Friday two hand grenades were thrown into the market in Battambang, injuring 15 people.

On Thursday seven Cambodians were killed and 12 injured when their vehicle hit a Russian TM-57 anti-tank mine on Route 69 in Banteay Meanchey province in the far northwest.

"We believe the mine was probably laid minutes before the incident at around midday," Mr. Williams said. "It's a heavily travelled route."

A senior government official told Reuters Sunday that Mr. Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh, enemies through 13 years of civil war, had agreed to jointly lead the Defence and Interior Ministries that control the military and police.

The Finance Ministry, expected to play an increasingly important role as hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign aid is pumped into the war-ravaged economy, will be turned over to FUNCINPEC.

FUNCINPEC will also be in charge of foreign affairs, the official said, while Mr. Hun Sen's party will retain control of the

Information Ministry.

Head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk rewarded the ruling party leaders for accepting a peaceful compromise, awarding three of them the highest military rank Monday.

Heng Samrin, whom the Vietnamese installed as Cambodian leader after they drove the Khmer Rouge out of Phnom Penh in 1979, Chea Sim, who runs the 40,000-strong police and Mr. Hun Sen all became five-star generals in the new army.

Prince Norodom Chakrapong, who led a short-lived secessionist movement in eastern Cambodia after the election, was made a four-star general. He apologised to his father for the failed movement.

Prince Sihanouk urged the members of Cambodia's Constituent Assembly Monday to write and ratify a constitution while he travels to North Korea and China for health reasons.

The prince's latest statement released by the Royal Palace moved up his departure abroad several weeks from early August to July 10.

"Due to extreme fatigue and a certain number of health problems, I humbly request the permission of the honourable representatives of the Cambodian people to take leave of our venerable country from July 10 until Sept. 15, Prince Sihanouk said in a statement released Monday.

According to the Paris agreements, a new constitution must be ratified by the constituent

Bomb-shattered Uffizi Museum reopens

FLORENCE, Italy (AP) — Thousands of people waited for hours in the hot sun, pushing and jostling for position as the Uffizi Gallery reopened, just over three weeks after a bomb shattered the west wing. For many the faces paled by Botticelli made it worthwhile. "Never in the course of human endeavour have so few done so much for so many," said Culture Minister Alberto Ruich, paraphrasing Winston Churchill in praising the Uffizi staff for its work in reopening the museum. Bot the "so many" had to broil in the sun for an extra hour Sunday while Mr. Ronchey, Senate President Giovanni Spadolini and his entourage had a private tour, delaying the scheduled 11 a.m. opening to the public. "This is a once in a lifetime chance," said Karen Scharrer of Augusta, Georgia, whose enthusiasm for the chance to see the Uffizi was not dampened by the hours-long wait. Most of the visitors waited three or four hours, fanning themselves, jostling for position and listening to the noisy demonstration by souvenir vendors who looted their lucrative locations in front of the Uffizi because of the bombing. "I think the faces of Botticelli are so beautiful. I can't leave without seeing them," said Kim Koerner, 25, a law student from Pittsburgh. The Uffizi is Italy's most popular museum, and reopening it in record time at the height of the tourist season was more than just a symbolic gesture. The government had feared it had been targeted in part to threaten Italy's most promising tourist season in years. The bomb, hidden in a stolen mini-van, shattered the west wing, killing five people, destroying the works of some old masters and damaging many others to Italy's premier art museum.

School board wants all profane words listed

OSKALOOSA, Kan. (AP) — In a northeastern Kansas town where folks still stop by the corner drugstore for a chocolate milkshake and some chitchat, talk has turned to profanity. Under discussion is last month's school board decision requiring teachers to list "profane words" and how often they're used in books for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Parents are to review the lists and decide whether to permit their children to read the books. Opponents say it censorship and say they're shocked such a ruling could be made in their town of 1,000, which residents say is neither overwhelmingly liberal nor conservative. But Paul Reed, a school board member and Southern Baptist minister, defends the proposal he introduced and the panel approved May 9 in a 4-3 vote. It was a double standard that the school prohibited students from using profanity in their speech but not from reading it in books, Rev. Reed said. School Board President Dale Heston said the book that sparked the controversy was Katherine Paterson's Bridge To Terabithia, which was to be read in a fifth-grade classroom. In one sentence, a father asks his son: "What are they teaching you at that damn school?" Mr. Heston said that new proposal that would require teachers to give parents a list of books to be read that year. Parents could object to the material, they could meet with teachers. Part of the debate is how the new policy will be enforced — the board didn't define "profane words."

Food for thought for high-fliers

PERTH (AFP) — Executives facing big decisions in the early afternoon should consider missing lunch, a new survey here suggests. Tests on 40 people showed productivity and efficiency fell for at least 90 minutes after even a small meal, University of Western Australia psychology researcher Augustine Hwee told a psychology conference here. He said the problem was being called a "post-lunch dip." Prof. Hwee said food intake is thought to affect the release of message-transmitting chemicals in the brain. "Those with big decisions in the early afternoon or a business meeting to attend should consider putting off lunch," he said. The survey consisted of 40 participants aged 18 to 30 carrying out various office tasks, simulating the demands of a busy office. Their performances were reevaluated after the consumption of a meat and salad roll, chocolate cake and soft drink. Prof. Hwee said that following the meal participants were more tired, less alert and took longer to perform their tasks. He said those tested shortly after eating at mid-night were just as slow as those tested after eating at midday.

Bulls overcome Suns 99-98 to win 3rd consecutive NBA title

PHOENIX (R) — The Chicago Bulls won an historic third consecutive NBA championship Sunday when John Paxson hit a three-pointer with 3.9 seconds left to pull out a 99-98 victory over the Phoenix Suns.

The Bulls, exhorted by their number one star Michael Jordan throughout the finals to "make history," won the best-of-seven series 4-2 to become only the third national basketball association team to "three-peat" and the first since the Boston Celtics swept eight titles from 1959-66.

"This is a dream," said Paxson. "Maybe we were the ones destined to win after all," he added, referring to Suns' star Charles Barkley's claims that Phoenix was a team of destiny after winning two of three in Chicago to bring the series back home.

"It means a lot to us because we made history," Jordan said. "Very few teams have done this, especially with so much parity in this league."

The Suns, who held the Bulls to a record-low 12 points in the fourth quarter and came back from an eight-point deficit at the start of the period, had a 98-94 lead with two minutes, 23 seconds to go.

But with a half-minute left, Jordan, who led all scorers with 33 points, made an uncontested end-to-end run to make it 98-96.

After Paxson's bomb, Phoenix had one last chance, inbound the ball with 3.9 seconds on the clock. But Horace Grant, who scored just one point in each of the past two games, blocked Kevin Johnson as time expired.

"Ironically it was a guy who hadn't a great offensive game the last two games," said Jordan. "We can forgive him, be said. "So it meant a lot to Horace and it meant a lot to us."

It was also Grant who made the pass to Paxson on the three-point line.

"Once I saw Paxson got the ball I knew it was good," Jordan

said. "That's mechanical. Paxson said. "You catch and you shoot. I've done it hundreds of thousands of times."

Paxson's three-pointer gave Chicago its only non-Jordan points of the quarter, as Phoenix outscored the Bulls 19-12.

Scottie Pippen added 23 and a team-high 12 rebounds for Chicago.

Barkley and Dan Majerle both had 21 points to lead Phoenix. Kevin Johnson added 19 points and 10 assists. Barkley had a game-high 17 rebounds.

"I can't think of a more dramatic finish in a series than this," said Chicago coach Phil Jackson. "We never could get a hold of this (Phoenix) basketball club," Jackson said. "We've always been able to defend somebody, put the claws on them, hold them."

"We couldn't hold this team down. They found ways to squiggle out and they came back at you all the time," Jackson said. "We had a nice lead and all of a sudden their defence took over in the fourth quarter. We're so fortunate to come out of that game with an opportunity to win."

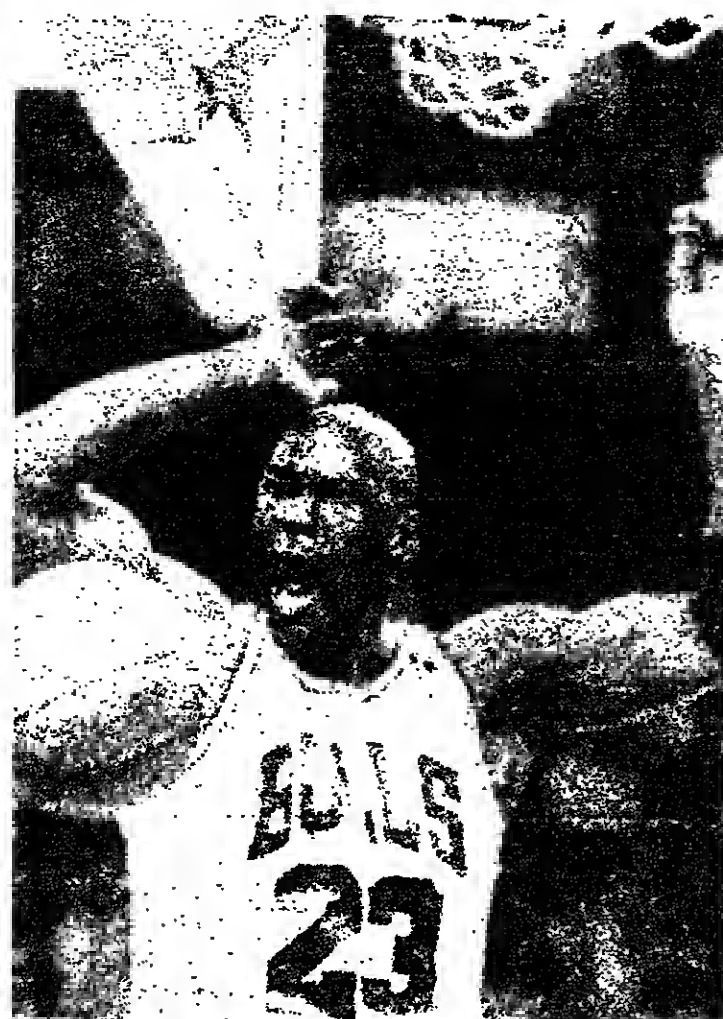
"We lost to a great team," said Phoenix coach Paul Westphal. They are worthy champions. They did what they had to do to win today."

Barkley says only a player can understand his hurt

Barkley says no one but a player can understand the hurt he feels.

After the Suns lost to the Bulls in game six of the National Basketball Association finals, giving Chicago its third championship in a row, Barkley said: "It's really difficult for our team right now. It just hurt."

"I think people don't understand — sometimes they talk about how much money guys



Michael Jordan rips and roars as he leads the Bulls to their 3rd NBA title

make and what commercials they do or whatever, but at times like this I think it's really bad to be an athlete.

"I don't think people realise that you are human, that you have feelings."

"It just wasn't meant to be. We can't do anything about it but congratulate the Bulls and just try to keep our emotions under control. Because right now you hurt

a lot."

But he added: "I look at the Bulls and I look at us and I'm proud of both teams. We're the only two teams in the league that made up their minds to go to the finals."

"I think the Bulls were on a mission to three-peat. And from the first day we (Phoenix) met ... our only objective was to go to the finals."

Orthodoxi, Ahli clash today in long-delayed basketball final

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's basketball powerhouse, Al Ahli and Al Orthodoxi, Tuesday meet in the long awaited final match of the 1992 Jordan Basketball Championship, which had been put on hold since Jan. 27 after controversy hit the championship while organisers — the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) — stumbled trying to find an acceptable solution to all sides.

Fans will finally get to watch the Kingdom's top-two teams clash at the Sports Palace after a series of postponements which led the JBF to contemplate cancelling the 1992 championship.

Both teams agreed to play the final after Al Ahli, who



Murad Barakat

had sparked the controversy by lodging a complaint with the JBF, announced on March 17 that they were withdrawing their protest as a goodwill gesture.

Al Ahli had won their first round match 68-65, the controversy arose when Al Orthodoxi won the second match 84-81 in overtime. The following day Al Ahli protested to the JBF citing that they had lost the match due to "mismanagement by the referees who, among other things, failed to record two points on the score-sheet, leading to a 75-75 tie and an overtime which cost Al Ahli the match and the 1992 title."

The JBF dismissed Al Ahli's protest — although acknowledging that a mistake had been made by the referees — and proposed a rematch, which

both clubs refused. The JBF then decided that a new 3-match round would be played, but again, both clubs found the solution unfair.

Al Ahli had meanwhile appealed to the Ministry of Youth, who recommended the forming of a fast-finding committee. The matter then remained unresolved until Al Ahli withdrew their protest and agreed to play a final deciding match, the winner of which will be crowned Jordan's 1992 basketball champion.

Both teams meanwhile met twice, and Al Ahli won both matches. The first match was on March 19, a charity game to benefit the Queen Alia Social Welfare Fund. Al Ahli won 82-78. The second match was in the final of the Maydan Basketball Tournament which



Hilal Barakat

Al Ahli won after defeating Al Orthodoxi 90-71.

Al Orthodoxi will be led by the Barakat brothers Murad and Hilal, while Al Ahli depend on a bigger number of players like Nasser Bushnaq, Marwan Ma'touq, Samir Murqus, and Yousef Zaghloul.

During the past month, Al Orthodoxi who were missing some players during the season, regrouped their team and played a series of friendly matches in Syria in preparation for the final, hoping to regain the title they have held for the past decade.

Al Ahli, who dominated the championship in the 1970's, won the title in 1990 and will be hoping to end their opponent's dominance of the game. That is what fans of both teams will be waiting to see Tuesday at 6.30 p.m.

Barcelona win Spanish title

MADRID (R) — Real Madrid relived the vivid nightmare of a year ago as the Spanish League title slipped from their grasp on the final day of the season.

While Barcelona did what was expected of them — they beat Real Sociedad 1-0 in Sunday's final fixture — Madrid did what most of their fans believed they could not do.

They lost away to Tenerife for the second successive year, squandering a one-point championship lead and leaving the title in the hands of their arch-rivals for the third successive year.

Delirious Barcelona fans held a night-long street party in the Catalan capital with chants of "Tenerife, Tenerife" mingling with shouts of "Barca, Barca" for their own heroes.

Neither Madrid coach Benito Floro nor his players, who wept openly after the 2-0 defeat, wanted to admit the team had been affected by memories of last year, when they again went to Tenerife leading the league but lost 3-2 after being 2-0 up.

"We ran into a Tenerife side which showed great precision in attack and great determination in defence," Floro said.

Unlike last team, Madrid never looked like winning. They were outplayed in a first half which brought both Tenerife's goals, the first from Argentine Oscar Dertycia in the 11th minute and the second a thumping headed by

Sebastian Chano two minutes from half-time.

Floro was magnanimous in adversity.

"Barcelona are worthy champions because, quite simply, they ended up with more points than we did. In this life you have to learn how to win and how to lose," he said.

Barcelona coach Johan Cruy added his usual pinch of spice to his post-victory comments.

"I am the happiest in the world. Now we must go for fourth league title. But I am still angry that we left it to the 'match of the season,'" he said.

Bebeto wins scoring title

Deportivo de La Gornua baby-faced Brazilian striker Bebeto closed his first season in Spanish soccer Sunday as league scoring champion with 29 goals.

The 29-year-old scored 40 per cent of Deportivo's 67 goals to lead the northwestern Spanish team to its second-best season ever and a spot in a Europea Cup.

Deportivo, which has spent only 23 seasons in the first division since the team's founding in 1904, finished in third place with a 22-10-6 record and qualified for the 1993-94 UEFA Cup.

Real Madrid's Chilean striker Ivan "the terrible" Zamoran followed Bebeto on the scoring chart with 26 goals.

Coetzer, Krajicek advance at Wimbledon

LONDON (AFP) — South Africa's Amanda Coetzer flirted with a shock early exit from Wimbledon before finally edging into the second round Monday.

The 24th seed played five break points against France's Sandrine Testud in 2-2 in the third set after going wildly off the rails in the second.

But after holding on in the fifth game of the third, Coetzer immediately broke her opponent. She won 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

"I managed to get my concentration back in the third set. At that point I wasn't really thinking about what it meant if I lost I was just trying to hang in there," the 21-year-old said.

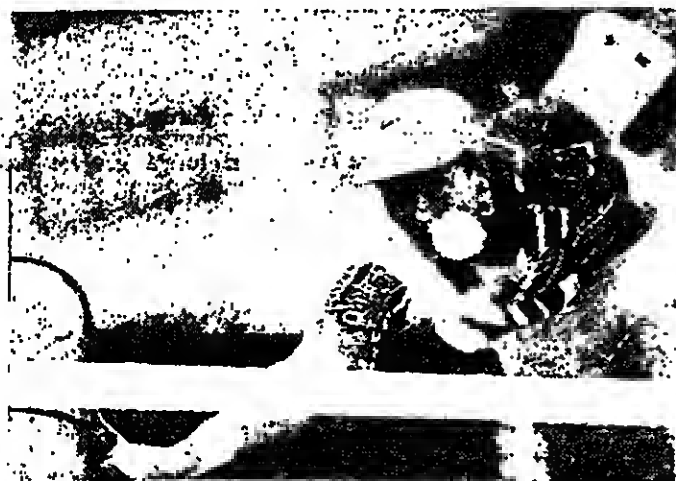
Despite her seeding and a world ranking of 17, Coetzer has only once got beyond the third round of a Grand Slam event and that was the French Open in 1989, her first professional season.

"The biggest hurdle for me is my mind," she admitted. "It is nice to know that people are talking about me, playing Steffi Graf in the fourth round but for me each match is a bonus."

Coetzer now plays Silke Meier of Germany or Shaun Stafford, Indonesian Yayuk Basuki, one of the few players who can match Coetzer's ease at the net, had an efficient 6-4, 7-5 first round win over Noelle Van Lottum.

The Indonesian number one, who reached the last 16 last year, overcame some stiff resistance in the second set but finally broke her opponent in the 11th game and then served out confidently for the match.

Maleeva came through in straight sets, 6-2, 6-2 against Leila Meskhi while her sister Manuela Maleeva Fragniere, seeded one place below her younger sister at



Richard Krajicek stretches for a forehand

11, beat Britain's Lorna Woodroffe 7-5, 6-4.

Karel Novacek of the Czech Republic became the first seed to fall at this year's Wimbledon Tennis Championship in the opening round of the men's singles.

The 28-year-old 15th seed surrendered a two-sets lead to go down 4-6, 4-6, 6-3 to Luis Herrera of Mexico.

Richard Krajicek, dark horse for the Wimbledon men's singles title, powered into the second round here by outclassing Sweden's Nicklas Kulti in just under two hours.

The big-serving ninth seed from Holland, a semi-finalist in the French Open two weeks ago,

won 6-4, 6-3, 6-4 despite taking a little time to warm to his task.

The towering world number 12 had to save two break points in the ninth game before capturing the first set in 44 minutes.

But he soon launched a string of searing aces in the second set from a delivery that has been timed at an awesome 132mph and Kulti, after a courageous start, was eventually blown away in straight sets.

Krajicek kept his opponent from Stockholm at full stretch with an unrelenting attack and his performance provided a vivid early warning for the rest of the men's field.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMARA HIRSCH
1992 Jordan Times Columnist

SPOT THE VITAL ASSET

East-West vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
A K 10 2
A 3 2
7 5 4
Q 7 4

WEST J 9 8 7 6 **EAST** Q 5 4
Void 10 6 4
J 9 8 A K Q 6

SOUTH J 10 8 3 A K 6 2
K Q J 9 7 6 5
10 3 2
A 5

The bidding:
South West North East
1 2 Dbl 4
5 Pass Pass Dbl
Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Seven of ♠
Here's another curious deal from the recent Summer North American Championships held in Toronto. Can you find the card that is essential for East to hold if South's five-heart contract is to be defeated?

West's two heart bid was a take-out for the black suits. We do not have the stomach for that action with such a weak hand when not vulnerable, let alone at adverse vulnerability. East's double was based on the reasonable expectation of finding a somewhat stronger holding in the opposite hand.

Declarer won the spade lead in dummy and cashed the remaining high spades for a diamond discard. Declarer ruffed a spade, then came an avalanche of hearts. On the first trump West discarded the jack of clubs, a discouraging signal in the East-West methods. So East, Marty Bergen of Briarcliff Manor, N.Y., knew he had to keep the king of clubs guarded at least one. East had to make three discards. Which three cards would you let go?

Unlike experts, most average players hate to part with high cards. Move to the top of the class if you worked out that the one card East must hold at all costs is the six of diamonds! If you don't, declarer will exit with a diamond and you will eventually be forced to lead away from the king of clubs, handing declarer the contract. Bergen discarded the two of clubs and the king and queen of diamonds! When declarer exited with a diamond, Bergen was able to take the ace and exit with the six of diamonds to West's jack, and the club return made sure that the defenders would get a club trick.

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T O D A Y	<p>Cinema Tel.: 677420</p> <p>CONCORD</p> <p>A FEW GOOD MEN</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 5:45, 8:15, 10:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Cinema Tel.: 699238</p> <p>PLAZA</p> <p>Happy Eid Al Adha Adel Imam — in The Forgotten Arabic.</p> <p>Shows at 11 a.m.: 10, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30, 12:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Cinema Tel.: 634144</p> <p>PHILADELPHIA</p> <p>OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS</p> <p>Children's show at 11 a.m. on Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays the movie: The Fox and the Hound</p> <p>Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30</p>	<p>Tel.: 675571</p> <p>Nabil Al Mashini Theatre</p> <p>For the first time in Amman you have a date with the National Palestinian Theatre — the Gaza Strip — in a play entitled: The Assassination of Hantallah by artist Saeed Bitar</p> <p>Shows on Friday and Saturday, June 4 and 5 at 8:30 p.m. Please book seats in advance.</p>	<p>Nabil & Hisham's Tel.: 625155</p> <p>AHLAN THEATRE</p> <p>presents 1) Parliament and 2) ... at 9 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 2) Ahlan New World Order at 9 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday</p>
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Arafat reverses decision to resign as Fateh's leader

TUNIS (AP) — Yasser Arafat on Monday withdrew his resignation as head of Fateh, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) largest guerrilla faction, senior aides said.

Mr. Arafat had stormed out of a central committee meeting Sunday night following sharp accusations of corruption and political miscalculations at a weekend meeting.

The committee resumed its deliberations Monday after Mr. Arafat met with PLO leaders and agreed to withdraw his resignation, the aides said. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

It was the latest in a series of crises that have plagued the PLO since it was ostracised by its traditional Arab backers three years ago because of Mr. Arafat's pro-Iraq policy.

Fateh was officially established by Mr. Arafat in 1965 to lead a guerrilla war against the state of Israel. It came to prominence after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and gradually took over the PLO.

Mr. Arafat, 63, has been chairman of the PLO since 1969. It was not clear whether he also had planned to quit as PLO chairman. To do so, however, he would have to convene the 451-seat Palestine National Council (PNC), the Palestinians' parliament-in-exile.

The PNC is the only body empowered to elect, dismiss or approve the resignation of the PLO chairman and the executive committee. Mr. Arafat is sensitive to criticism. To strengthen his grip on the PLO and his image as Mr. Palestine, he has in the past quit both Fateh and the PLO, only to return to both at the insistence of his followers.

Despite the schisms and criticisms, Mr. Arafat remains for most Palestinians the symbol of their struggle for a homeland.

After the main co-founders of Fateh, Khalil Wazir and Salah Khalaf, were assassinated in Tunisia in 1988 and 1991, Mr. Arafat became only surviving historical leader of the Palestinian revolution and co one has been groomed to take his place.

He has in the past two years come under pressure to start de-

legating some authority to ensure the survival of the PLO.

The Fateh sources said the harshest criticism Sunday came from Mohammad Ghoneim, a member of Fateh's Central Committee.

Mr. Ghoneim, also known as Abu Maher, accused Mr. Arafat of allowing some advisers to dip into the PLO's already depleted coffers to set up business ventures around the world. Mr. Ghoneim singled out Bassam Abu Sharif, Mr. Arafat's top political adviser, and Nizar Abu Ghazaleh, a financial aide, as the main squanders of PLO money.

Mr. Arafat has been relying heavily on PLO investments to finance the movement after his traditional bankrollers in the Gulf cut off financial aid in retaliation for his support of Iraq.

The PLO's \$300 million annual budget has been progressively slashed by over 70 per cent, and the belt-tightening measures have caused serious hardship for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who depend on the movement.

Repeated efforts by the PLO leadership to reconcile with the Gulf states have been shunned by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait which appear unwilling to forgive those who opposed the anti-Iraq coalition.

Fateh Central Committee members also criticised Mr. Arafat for not doing enough to mend fences with the Gulf, the sources said.

They said that Mr. Ghoneim was so enraged that he would not listen to repeated efforts by Mr. Arafat to explain himself.

Earlier in the session, other speakers criticised Mr. Arafat for allowing the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks to be too lenient in dealing with Israel.

Some members advocated a withdrawal from the 20-month-old U.S.-arranged peace process until Israel agrees to Palestinian conditions the most significant of which are that the conflict over Jerusalem be included in the agenda of the talks and that the Jewish state endorse U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, which calls for withdrawal from the territories occupied in 1967.



REFUGEES HELD BACK: Russian soldiers held back a group of Abkhazian refugees who try to force their way aboard a ship in Sukhumi Sunday that was to take only women and children to safety from the fighting between the Georgian National Guard and Abkhazian troops (AFP photo)

Jordan was exempted from Iraq arms ban, probe told

LONDON (R) — Egypt and Jordan were feared to be diverting weapons to Baghdad in the 1980s but Britain's Defence Ministry refused to extend its arms embargo against Iraq to include them, a former defence official told an inquiry on Monday.

Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Glazebrook, who is now retired, said that as early as 1984 Britain's defence intelligence warned that Jordan was passing equipment used in nuclear, biological and chemical warfare to the Iraqis.

By 1987 those worries were extended to Egypt, he told the inquiry investigating whether the Conservative government knowingly broke its own ban on military sales to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war and in the years prior to the 1991 Gulf war.

The independent inquiry, set up last November, is keen to establish the truth about allegations of government collusion in Baghdad's acquisition of British parts for huge "superguns" and in helping British firms supply sophisticated machinery.

Col. Glazebrook said he had strongly opposed an application for the sale to Egypt of parts for Russian-designed ground-to-ground rockets.

He said he was against the sale

because he feared the parts could end up in Iraq, but was overruled by the ministry.

Following the Gulf war, rockets of the same type fitted with nerve gas warheads were discovered by United Nations' inspectors sent to destroy Iraq's chemical weapons stockpile.

Col. Glazebrook testified that when there was a wide discussion within the Defence Ministry about extending the weapons embargo to Egypt and Jordan, he was again overruled.

"It was impressed upon us several times that although we were controlling sales to Iran and Iraq it was no part of our job to interfere with legitimate trade to other countries," Col. Glazebrook told the inquiry in a public session.

Col. Glazebrook said other applications which had raised concern were from Jordan, which supported Iraq over its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, for nuclear, biological and chemical "filtration" packs for tanks and tank spurs.

Both Prime Minister John Major and Margaret Thatcher, who was prime minister during the time covered by the inquiry, are expected to give evidence. The inquiry could last for a year.

Ben Yahya ends Kuwait visit amid continuing criticism

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya left Kuwait Monday with no sign that his visit had helped mend ties strained by the Gulf war.

Mr. Ben Yahya refused to talk to reporters at the airport, and Tunisian embassy officials would not comment on the three-day visit.

Mr. Ben Yahya was the first official from an Arab country that did not support the 1991 war for the liberation of Kuwait to visit the emirate.

He delivered a letter to the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and met with Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, Kuwait's crown prince and prime minister.

Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs Abdul Aziz Al Dakheel told reporters the letter expressed Tunisia's wish to "end the negative results of the (Iraqi) invasion and build a new basis for relations."

But Kuwaitis were outraged by the visit. "A drop of a martyr's blood and a sigh from a POW (prisoner of war) drives us to tear up all their letters and... relationship with them," Parliament member Khaled Al Adwa wrote in Al Watan daily on Saturday, the day the minister arrived.

The Tunisian official was quoted by Al Anba newspaper as saying he was very upset at the feelings expressed in the Kuwaiti press against his visit.

The newspaper, which usually tows the government line, ran a banner headline Saturday that read: "You are not welcome."

Interviews in the local daily with Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh and his foreign minister, Mohammad Salem Bassindawh, have been met with a similar public outcry.

Yemen sympathised with Iraq during its occupation of Kuwait.

Filali leaves Jeddah

Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdul Latif Al Filali left Monday after delivering a message to King Fahd apparently dealing with efforts to end differences that have split the Arabs since the Gulf war.

The official Saudi Press Agency said the message from King Hassan II was delivered during a meeting between King Fahd and the Moroccan minister Sunday, but did not disclose its contents.

King Hassan has been leading a campaign for healing the rift between Gulf states and other Arab states which opposed the U.S.-led coalition forces that ended Iraq's seven-month occupation of Kuwait in February 1991.

NEWS IN BRIEF

DFLP lashes at Ross nomination

TUNIS (R) — Hardline Palestinian leader criticised Monday the appointment of Dennis Ross as U.S. special coordinator for Middle East peace talks. Mr. Ross was an "extremist in his stands aligned on Israel," said Taysir Khaled of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The nomination of Mr. Ross "unveils clearly and frankly that the U.S. administration does not look for a role other than a full partnership with Israel to impose solutions which do not satisfy the minimum of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people," Mr. Khaled said in a statement.

Tests run at disused Lebanese refinery

NICOSIA (R) — Lebanon's refinery at Zaharani underwent test runs for four days last week after a shutdown of four years, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said Monday. It said the refinery, built in 1953 with a capacity of 17,000 barrels per day (b/d) near the end of a pipeline that starts in Saudi Arabia, processed 113,000 barrels during the test to determine the state of the refinery's various units. MEES said Lebanese Oil and Industry Minister Asad Rizk had said earlier this year that the Zaharani refinery, located near Sidon in the south, was unsuitable for Lebanon's needs and would therefore need to be rebuilt from scratch. The refinery, now government-owned, has suffered war damage and commercial and political disputes during its 40 years of existence. MEES said that prior to the shutdown, it averaged 10,000 bpd of processing. Lebanon's only other refinery, in Tripoli in the north, has been shut down for about the past nine months, necessitating imports of all the country's refined product needs.

Turkey to renew mandate for allies

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's National Security Council advised the government Monday to renew permission for allied planes to use Turkish bases to patrol northern Iraq. British, French and U.S. planes based in southern Turkey have been enforcing "no fly" zone north of the 36th Parallel to deter the Iraqi army from attacking territory held by dissident Kurds since the end of the Gulf war in 1991. The council said in a statement it has proposed extending the mandate of the allied force known as Provide Comfort II for six months. Its current term expires at the end of June. "The council decided that there had been no developments concerning the general situation in Iraq and northern Iraq to warrant ending this measure," it said. The council, headed by President Suleyman Demirel, also recommended the renewal for a further four months of emergency rule regulations governing 10 provinces in east and southeast Turkey, scene of a nine-year-old revolt by Turkish Kurds.

Syria's population doubles in 20 years

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria's population has doubled in the last 20 years to reach around 15 million people in 1993, a Civil Status Department report said. The population might be even higher as an estimated 500,000 people were not registered with the authorities, said the report, which was released Sunday. Some of these might be trying to avoid military service, experts said. With one of the world's highest growth rates, the population is expected to reach 17.5 million by the turn of the century, four times the number registered in 1960, the report added.

Endeavour launched after one-day delay

CAPE CANAVERAL (AFP) — The space shuttle Endeavour blasted off Monday for an eight-day mission to include a spacewalk and an attempt to retrieve a European satellite. The shuttle blasted off at 9:07 p.m. (1307 GMT) with six astronauts aboard. The launch was originally set for Sunday but was delayed for 24 hours because of heavy clouds over the launch site. The Endeavour flight was scheduled to last eight days during which the shuttle would achieve a European Space Agency (ESA) satellite. The Eureka (European Retrieval Carrier) has been circling earth since August. Astronaut David Low is to grab the satellite from orbit using the shuttle's robot arm.

Neo-Nazis threaten editor, students

FRANKFURT (R) — One of Germany's leading newspapers reported Monday that neo-Nazis had sent a death threat to an editor who printed articles of high school students condemning anti-Semitism and racist violence. The conservative Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung said three students who wrote for its monthly youth affairs page had also received copies of another letter posing a reward for anyone who attacked the editor, Kurt Reumann. The letters were part of a broad far-right campaign to intimidate students who wrote about Nazi crimes or racist attacks on Turkish pupils in German schools, the paper said.

Australia to consider British atomic offer

CANBERRA (R) — Australia will seek the views of aborigines before deciding whether to accept a British offer of compensation over nuclear tests in the desert during the 1990s, a government spokesman said Monday. Aborigines native to the Maralinga test area in south Australia would be asked their opinion before the cabinet decided whether to accept Britain's offer on go to court, the spokesman for Primary Industries Minister Simon Crean said. "We have a choice: Either accept the ex-gratia payment or pursue the matter legally," the spokesman said. The offer in the long-running dispute would go to cabinet as soon as possible, he said. Another government source said that meant within a few weeks. Aborigines have claimed as direct payment exactly what Britain offered Australia to negotiations last week — 45 million Australian dollars (\$1 million).

Somali refugees holed up in Brussels airport

BRUSSELS (R) — Lawyers for a group of Somalis holed up in Brussels airport said Monday they had applied for a court order to force Belgium to end their "inhuman treatment." Lawyer Jan Ferman said he had lodged an application with the magistrate's court for the Interior Ministry to appear in court Tuesday. The 19 Somalis, who arrived in Brussels six days ago to flee the civil war in their country, are being held in the transit lounge of Zaventem airport. "We are asking that they are given two rooms to stay in, beds, blankets and that they are given three meals a day with the possibility of a shower," Mr. Ferman told Reuters. "If within six hours of the court hearing, our demands are not met, then we ask that the Somalis be let into the country so that humanitarian organisations can at least give them some help," Mr. Ferman said.

Khartoum worries U.N. may intervene in south

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan has staged a demonstration against United Nations military actions in Somalia, apparently concerned that its own war-torn and famine-stricken south could be the next target of international intervention.

Khartoum newspapers led their front pages Monday with news of a march Sunday by an official High Committee for Saving the Somali People joined by pro-government trade unions.

They praised "heroic" Somali resistance and Mogadishu warlord Mohammed Farah Aided. The demonstrators presented notes to the U.S. embassy and U.N. representative in Sudan, complaining of "barbaric attacks" on the Somali people, the newspapers said.

General Aided's militia attacked and killed 24 Pakistani troops serving with the U.N.'s food aid protection force on June 5, provoking massive retaliation by U.N. forces.

During the attacks, U.N. peacekeepers shot dead some 80 Somalis in street protests. The newspapers carried photographs of demonstrators holding up placards but it was not clear how many there were or whether

the march had attracted spontaneous public support.

Diplomats say the Sudanese government is worried that U.S.-brokered safe havens in rebel-held areas of its own south could be the first step in a similar intervention in Sudan, racked by civil war and hunger for most of the past decade.

"They are talking about Somalia but it's the spectre of the south that really haunts them," said one senior diplomat. "They think the West is an a conspiracy against them and the safe havens are just the crack in the door."

U.S. Ambassador to Sudan Donald Peterson, who last week travelled to Nairobi for his fourth visit to rebel-held areas this year, negotiated the safe havens with two rival factions of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) last month.

They agreed to pull their forces out of Sudan's famine triangle to allow aid workers to reach tens of thousands of people believed at risk of starvation. But both SPLA sides kept their men in the area beyond a June 5 deadline and there were mounting reports last week of fresh fighting between them.

Indian prime minister rejects payoff charges

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao rejected Monday an opposition plot charges that he took a bribe, as a parliamentary panel debated whether to summon him for questioning about the allegations.

"The allegations against me are nothing but a political ploy to mislead the people," Mr. Rao told supporters during a ceremony held at his official residence here to mark his two years in office.

"The charges are meaningless and will not stick on me and I will stand vindicated ultimately," the 71-year-old premier said.

"I will come out clear from the acid test," Mr. Rao added at the first public meeting since Wednesday, when stockbroker Harshad Mehta claimed he had paid nearly \$333,000 to the premier to earn his political patronage.

Mr. Rao described the allegations by Mr. Mehta, the central figure in India's biggest financial scandal, as an opposition plot to destabilise his government.

Mr. Rao's denial came hours before a joint parliamentary committee probing the stock scam began debating whether to summon the premier for questioning about the charges.

Parliamentary sources said the panel appeared to be split along party lines on whether to summon Mr. Rao to testify about Mr. Mehta's allegations.

Members from Mr. Rao's Congress (I) Party opposed summoning the premier while opposition members wanted him to testify, the sources said.

In another development, the Delhi High Court Monday set Thursday as the date to start a trial on a criminal complaint accusing Mr. Mehta of making "false complaints" against Mr. Rao.

Muslim-Croat war rages amid urgent Serb moves

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Fighting flared between Muslim-led government troops and Croats in central Bosnia Monday amid signs of a Croat offensive in retaliation for recent gains by government forces.

Twelve people died overnight in heavy shelling of Jablanica, some 80 kilometres west of Sarajevo, said a U.N. spokesman, Major Pepe Gallegos. Croat forces fired the shells, U.N. sources said.

A Bosnia-wide truce was supposed to silence guns on Friday. But Muslim forces who dominate the Bosnian government army and the Bosnian Croat rivals are engaged in increasingly fierce fighting for territory as pressure mounts for a three-way division of Bosnia among Croats, Serbs and Muslims.

Members of Bosnia's collective presidency gathered in Zagreb, Croatia's capital, to discuss the proposal backed by Serbs and Croats. But Bosnian government participation was in limbo.

"This is too important a decision to be made" by the presidency only, government spokeswoman Senada Kreso said in Sarajevo. She said the presidency would return to the Bosnian capital after the Zagreb talks and convene a meeting of legislators, opposition members and intellectuals to discuss government options.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic headed for Copenhagen, Denmark, where European Com-

munity (EC) foreign ministers decided late Sunday to back the three-way division and yet insist that Bosnia-Herzegovina be preserved as a single state.

The meeting of EC foreign ministers acknowledged that the peace plan devised in part by their mediator, Lord Owen, was dead. They authorised him to discuss the Serb-Croat settlement.

Muslim leaders have appeared split since the plan for a three-way division of Bosnia became public last week.

On Sunday, Mr. Izetbegovic reportedly said he would boycott talks about the plan with the presidents of Serbia and Croatia. But Fikret Abdic, a fellow member of Bosnia's collective presidency, told the Associated Press in Zagreb on Monday that it would be irresponsible for Izetbegovic to skip the talks.

On Sunday, the leaders of Bosnia's Serbs and Croats met at a resort in Montenegro, Serbia's sole partner in the Yugoslav federation.

The delegations led by Bosnian Serb Radovan Karadzic and Bosnian Croat Mate Boban left smiling after studying maps in seven hours of talks, the Belgrade newspaper Politika said Monday. Both refused public comment.

An overwhelming vote by breakaway Croatian Serbs in Krajina and east Slavonia in favour of a swift union with Bosnian Serbs prompted a softly-softly approach Monday from Bosnian Serb leaders.

Amnesty chief calls rights conference a costly sham

VIENNA (AP) — The head of Amnesty International on Monday accused the World Conference on Human Rights of being a costly sham perpetrated by governments unwilling to toughen protection against abuses.

But officials and Western diplomats involved in the two-week conference, which is scheduled to end Friday, said they were making progress in negotiations that will improve the world's human rights record.

Pierre Sanne, secretary-general of Amnesty International, said the conference should be acting to counter dangerous trends reminiscent of the forces that tore apart Europe before World War II.

Mr. Sanne was scathing about one of the main achievements in

the drafting committee so far, the reaffirmation that human rights are universal and apply regardless of cultural or other differences. China and other Asian countries had disagreed on that point.

Each of the 155 countries taking part in the talks had to agree to these rights when they joined the United Nations, he said to a small group of reporters.

"They have spent time, energy, money to reopen issues that were closed 50 years ago," Mr. Sanne said, noting that the conference cost the U.N. \$1.4 million.

They are "using the taxpayers' money, our money, to come up and tell us, 'yes, the rights we told you had 50 years ago, you still have them,'" said Mr. Sanne. "It's a sham. We can't accept that."

But officials at the conference

said that even though they were reaffirming universality, delegates also were going on to new issues.

Ibrahim Fall, the U.N. official who is serving as general secretary of the conference, said committees also were making progress towards increasing spending for U.N. human rights enforcement and creating a high commissioner for human rights and an international court to punish offenders.

Mr. Fall said he expected the final document, already finished in the drafting committee, to be ready for the full conference by Thursday, which is the outside deadline.

Mr. Sanne, who like Mr. Fall is from Senegal, said he expected any advances to the final document to be "minimalist."

"They may come with the high commissioner but without any teeth," he said. "They may even commit themselves to increase the financial resources available to the system and then not pay their contributions."

Jobo Shattuck, U.S. assistant secretary of state for human rights, said even the reaffirmation of universality was needed because the new statement takes account of how much more diverse the world had become.

Mr. Sanne said the real problem facing the conference is "the dangerous situations that we face today, all these ethnic wars and governments that behave as if they are the owners of their people."

"The situation today is going on a sliding slope which is as dangerous as the situation in the '30s, where you have intolerance, where you have political violence combined with economic recession, large migrations, and then erecting of walls to protect from further migrations," he said.

Mr. Sanne said some governments — including China, Indonesia and other Asian countries, plus Mexico and Brazil — were blocking real progress at the conference.

Mr. Sanne, 45, took over last October of Amnesty International, which won the 1977 Nobel Peace Prize for its human rights campaigns.

COLUMN

Japanese hotelier is world's richest

NEW YORK (AP) — This year's richest individual: A Japanese hotel and railroad baron worth at least \$9 billion. Yoskiaki Tsutsumi, 59, ranks first in Forbes magazine's annual listing of the world's billionaires. The Walton family of Wal-Mart stores was the world's richest family, worth \$25.3 billion, the Forbes said in its July 5 edition. Forbes surveyed 311 individuals or families worldwide with a net worth at least \$1 billion. They have a combined wealth of \$636 billion. Mr. Tsutsumi, with interest in hotels, railroads and the Seibu Lions Baseball Team, is worth \$9 billion through his 40 per cent stake in the holding company Kokudo, the magazine said. But Forbes quoted unidentified sources as saying Tsutsumi owns all of Kokudo, making him worth \$22.5 billion. American billionaires comprised one-third of the list. The Walton family, which owns 38 per cent of Wal-Mart, added \$1.5 billion to its pile in the last year. Forbes said Microsoft Corp. founder Bill Gates was the country's richest individual, worth \$7.5 billion, up from \$6.4 billion last year, the magazine said. Here is the rest of the "magazine's" top 10 billionaires: Mars family, \$9.2 billion; United States; Du Pont family, \$8.6 billion; United States; Minoru and Akira Mori and family, \$7.5 billion; Japan; Donald E. and Samuel I. Newhouse Jr., \$7 billion; United States; Robert, Sid, Lee and Edward Bass, \$6.8 billion; United States; Warren E. Buffett, \$6.6 billion; United States; Erivan Haub, \$6.2 billion; Germany.

Heseltine has heart attack

ROME (R) — British Cabinet Minister Michael Heseltine suffered a heart attack during a private visit to Venice, the Italian News Agency (ANSA) reported Monday. The report, which did not name its sources, said Trade and Industry Secretary Heseltine was currently in the cardiology unit of the city's main hospital.

Queen apologises for speeding

LONDON (R) — Britain's Queen Elizabeth has sent a muted apology to a family she frightened by roaring past them at the wheel of her luxury Jaguar limousine as they strolled in a royal park. In a letter written by her private secretary, thought to be the first of its kind to a subject, the queen expressed "concern for any alarm or inconvenience" she may have caused. The Sun tabloid newspaper splashed the letter on its front page along with a picture of the Dawson family posed in front of Windsor Castle, one of the queen's homes near London. Nigel Dawson, 34, shouted at the queen to slow down as she sped through the park surrounding Windsor Castle at 60 mph (97 kph). But the queen ignored his protests, the Sun said. Mr. Dawson, who was having a day out with his wife and three sons, complained to police. The speed limit on roads in the park is 38 mph (61 kph). "I never expected to get a letter from her," a placated Dawson told the Sun. "It doesn't actually say the word 'sorry' but I realise it's about as close as the queen will ever get."

Ex-Mexico City police chief jailed for corruption

MEXICO CITY (R) — The former police chief of Mexico City was arrested this weekend on charges that he accepted a bribe of 50,000 to release alleged drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman Loera after he was captured here two years ago. Santiago Tapia Aceves, who stepped down as head of the capital's police force just six months ago, faces up to 21 years in prison for freeing Mr. Guzman, according to the federal attorney general's office. Mr. Tapia, 52, was arrested at his home and was charged with arranging Mr. Guzman's release after police had captured him and several other men in a Mexico City neighbourhood in 1991. The officers who arrested Mr. Tapia, accompanied by other police officials, arrived in a helicopter where Mr. Guzman was held, took a bag full of money from the alleged drug-trafficker and let him go. Mr. Tapia, according to newspaper reports here, refused to say anything in his defence, but complained to the judge that he was in ill health before being led off to jail. Police said the charges against Mr. Tapia arose from their investigation into the May 24 shooting in Guadalupe of Cardinal Juan Posadas Ocampo.